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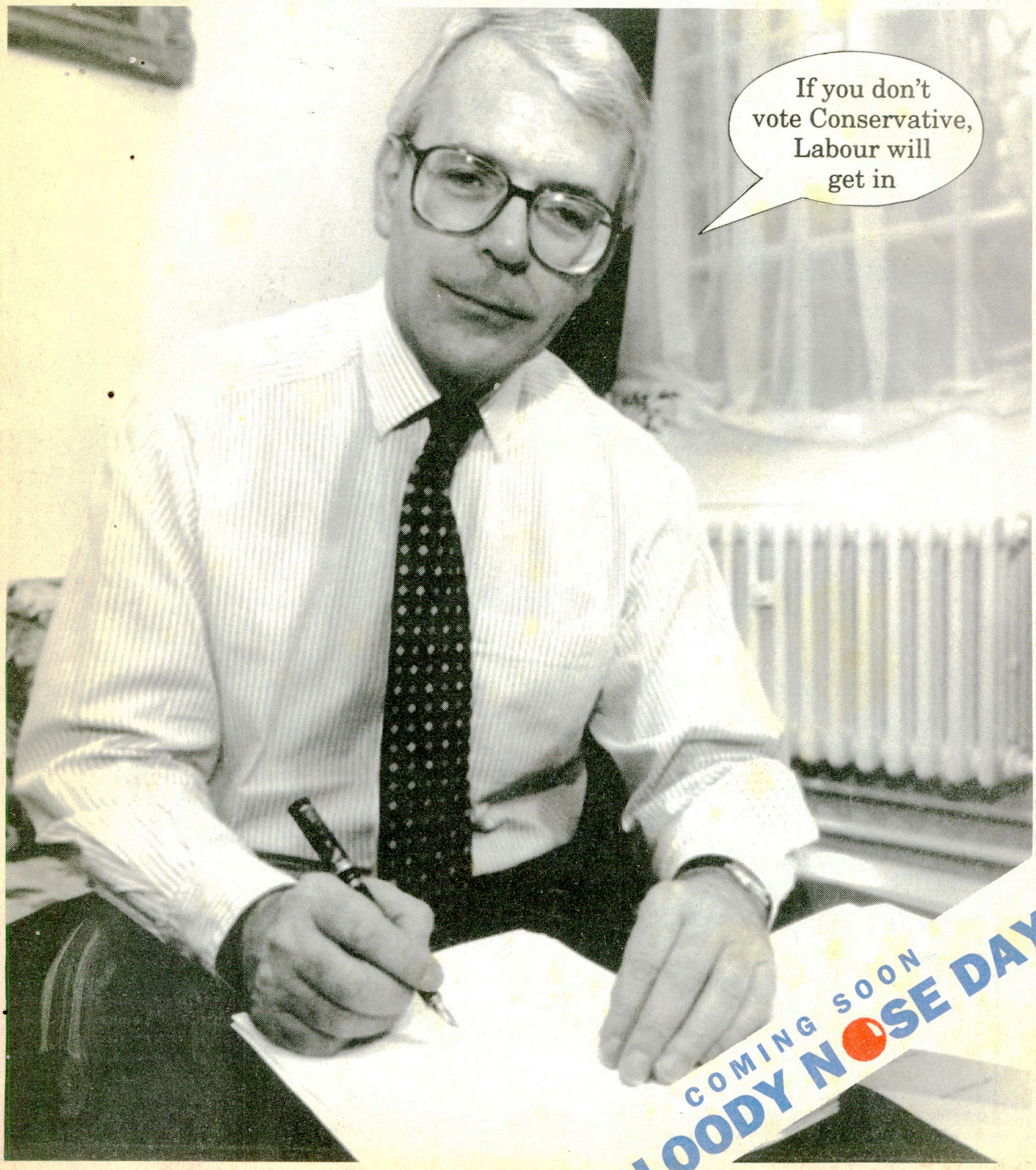

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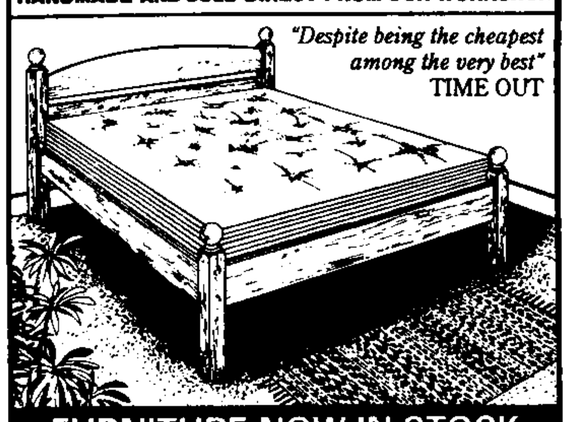

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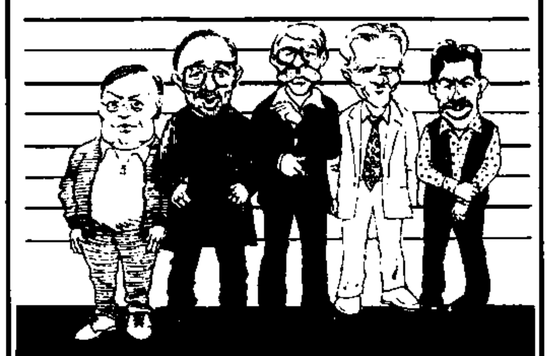

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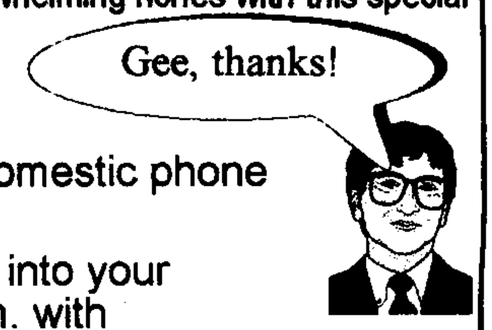

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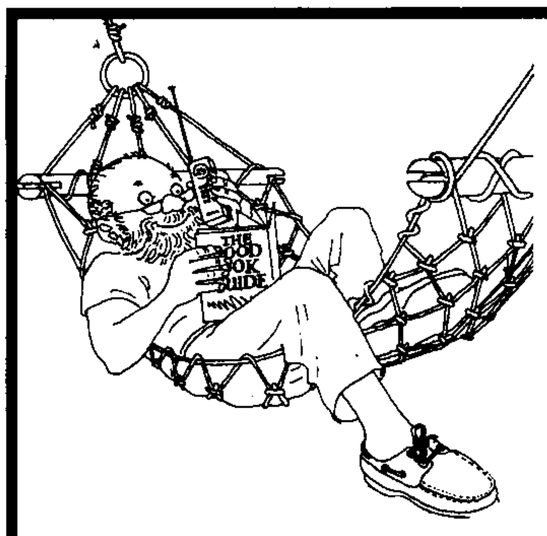

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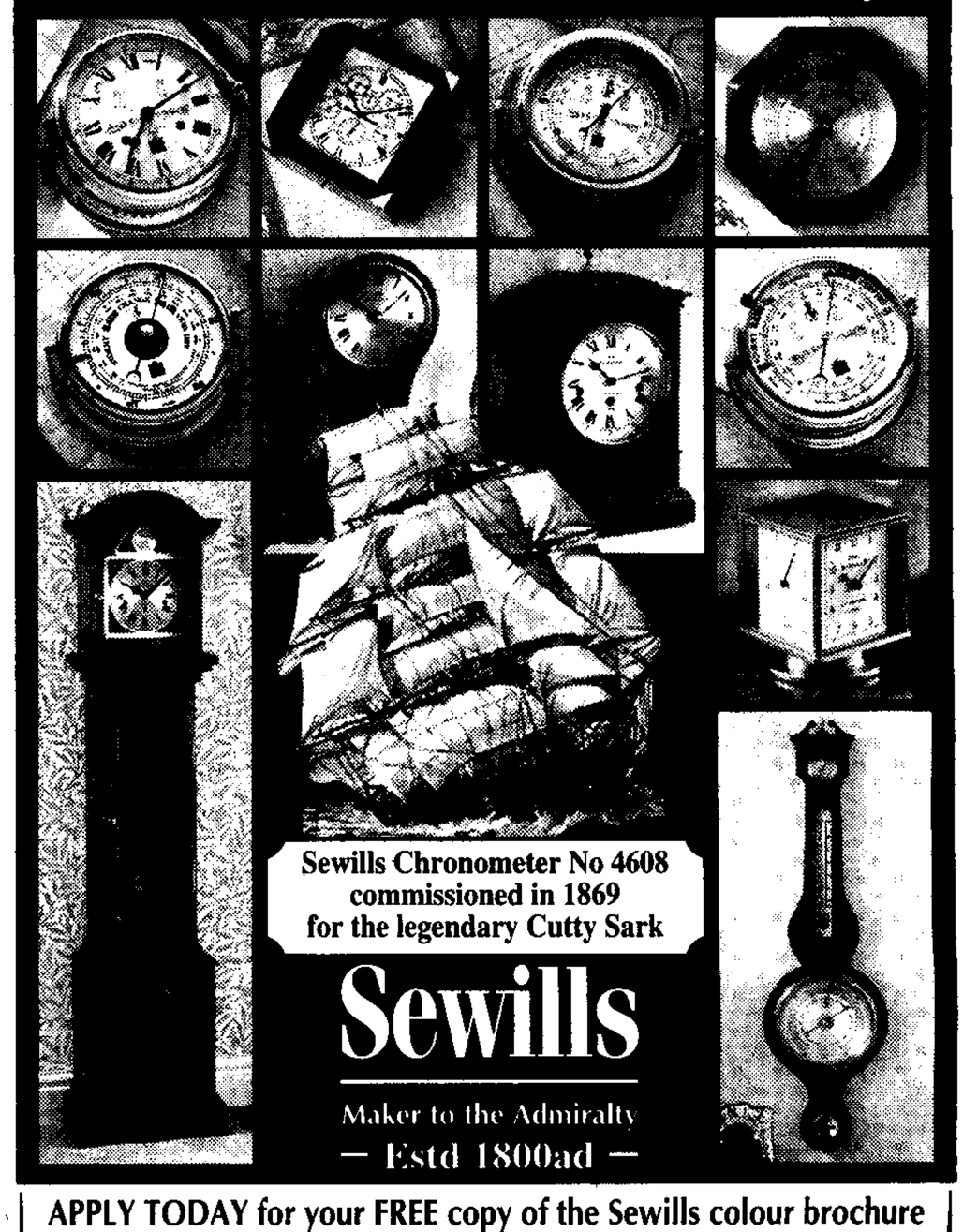

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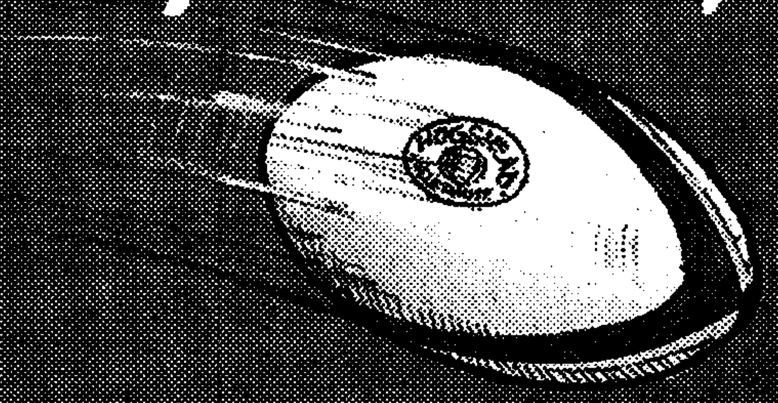

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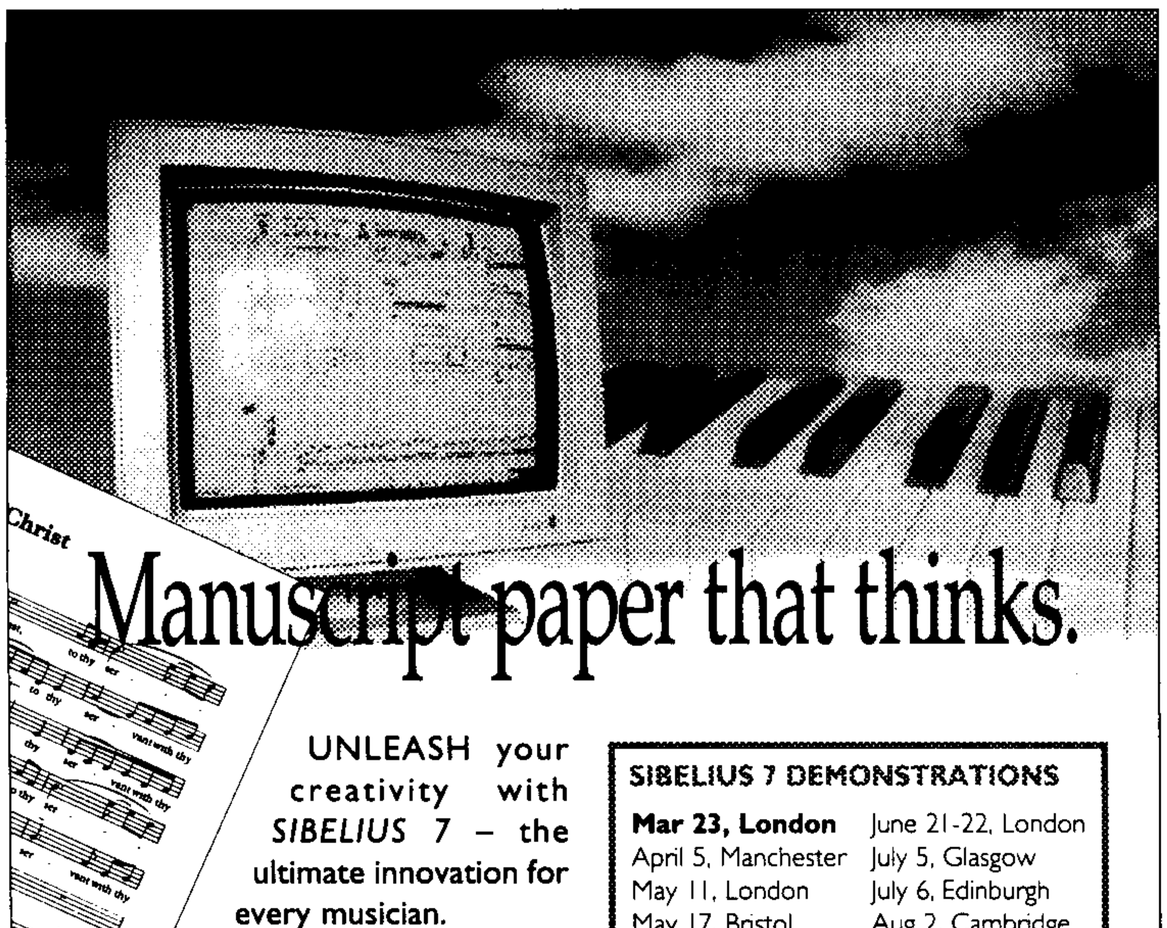

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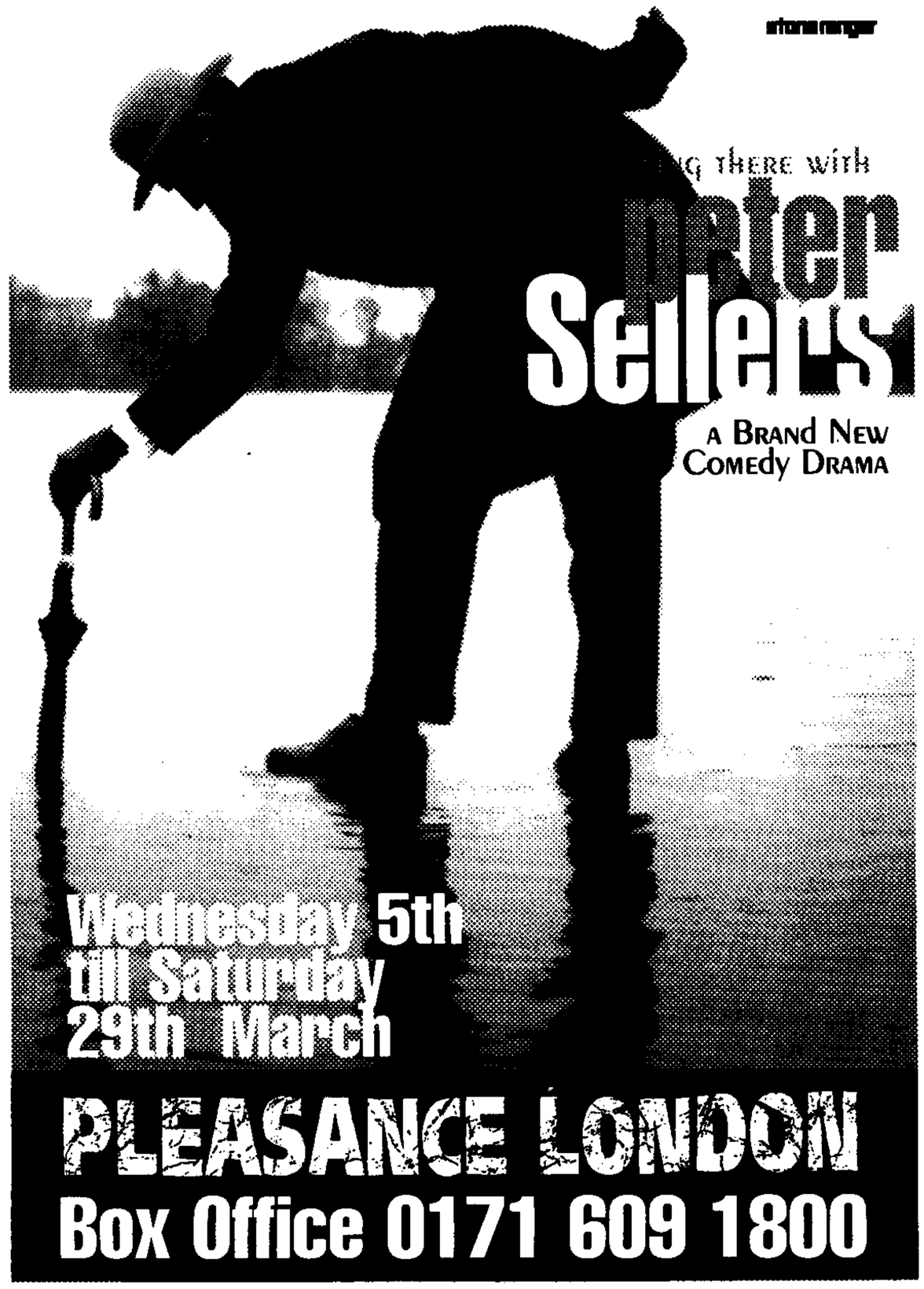

Gnome

Apology

THE Sunday Gnome (Britain's fastest shrinking Sunday newspaper) in a piece headed "Di's A Thief!" may inadvertently have given the impression that Her Holiness Princess Diana of Calcutta had sought to profit in some way from a sale of her dresses being auctioned on behalf of various charities.

The sub-heading "Toddlers starve as Princess Gree-Di Grabs the Dosh!" may have contributed to the erroneous inference that the Most Beautiful Woman in the World Ever had even thought for one second of profiteering from her incredibly and unparalleled generosity on behalf of the world's needy.

Our report was based entirely on documents supplied to us in good faith by our journalists whom we believed to be reliable.

We will now take every step to discover who these journalists are and ensure that they will never again work on a decent newspaper. *(So they can stay here then? E.S.)*

The Sunday Gnome has paid Her Royal Beatitudiness a substantial sum which she has assured us she will donate to charity. We're happy to do this in order to underline our sincere regret at our mistake and our desire never again to let sensationalism overcome honest and sober reporting.

E.I. Addiso
pp. Lord Horlicks
Express Snoozepapers
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ON OTHER PAGES

How Princess Di-Sgrace will pocket the libel lolly to spend on toy boys, drugs and boozy nights — documents in full . . . . . 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 94

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COLOUR SECTION

EDS, the American computer firm gobbling up UK government information technology contracts, is now part of a consortium chosen to take part in the bid for £150m of prison service work.

The potential contract threatens more than 2,500 public sector jobs in personnel, administration and IT.

EDS's most notable contract so far is to set up the Inland Revenue's self-assessment system — which is running over the original budget by £600m (see *Eyes passim*).

Meanwhile, an EDS contract with the courts service to computerise listings of cases and their progress has been stalled. The £25m project, called Caseman, hit technical problems in the printing of bailiffs' reports, and the delay has disrupted the training of thousands of court staff.

Caseman was supposed to be a big part of the modernisation urged by Lord Woolf. The system must be secure and failsafe because the information contained is so sensitive. Obviously the court service can rely entirely on EDS given its proven record.

PS: EDS's partner in the prison services consortium is a UK subsidiary of weapons systems manufacturer Lockheed Martin, the company that in 1995 in the US pleaded guilty to paying a $1m bribe to an Egyptian official to secure a $79m order for three aircraft. The US courts fined Lockheed Martin $21.8m for violating the bribery provisions of the foreign corrupt practices act. Yet another appropriate choice to take part in the running of the prison service.

NEIL HAMILTON, who resigned as trade and industry minister after being exposed for accepting secret payments from Harrods owner Mohamed Fayed, is back in business. The *Eye* can reveal that he has been lobbying his former department on its prices policy in the newspaper industry on behalf of commercial interests.

Between 1992 and October 1994, Hamilton was the DTI minister responsible for competition policy. Among the sensitive issues he ruled on was the dispute between newspapers, wholesalers and retailers over what cut of the cover price they should receive.

About 18 months after resigning from the DTI, Hamilton set up a business partnership with Derek Laud, the eccentric Tory lobbyist who was recently charged in the US for drink-driving in a huge car crash. Quaintly titled "Competition Analysis", its purpose is to advise on competition law — the very policy Hamilton was in charge of as a minister.

One of their first clients was Martins, the newsagent group which has been campaigning for "a fair slice of the price" from the sale of newspapers. It needed political muscle to hustle the DTI. So who better to hire than the dapper lobbyist and ex-minister with all the inside knowledge? Step forward the ever-willing Hamilton, who promptly wrote Martins' submission to the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) at the DTI — in return for a fat fee.

In September 1996 Martins joined the Multiple News Agency (MNA), which represents the major retailers. The MNA then merged Martins' proposals into its own document for the OFT. But the MNA became nervous about Hamilton's involvement. Its executive director, Neil Robinson, wrote to Laud complaining that his performance was pisspoor. He then added, perceptively, that Hamilton's commercial interest "is likely to have an adverse affect on our campaign if it ever became public that he was the author of our submission to the Office for [*sic*] Fair Trading".

The letter concluded: "My board feel that the whole of our political campaign could be jeopardised if the link between ourselves and Hamilton were ever known in the public domain".

That would seem a fair assessment.

MEANWHILE, the liar and cheat who (somehow) is still Tory MP for lucky old Tatton, went to give evidence to the Downey committee on standards brimming with customary self-confidence and weighed down with hundreds of pages of self-justification.

Hamilton was alarmed, however, not so much by questions about cash payments from Fayed, which he flatly denied, but about the mysterious absence in some of his tax returns of payments that he had admitted receiving from the lobbyist Ian Greer.

His replies to these questions, and Sir Gordon Downey's assessment of them, is said to make up a substantial part of the Downey report which is already on the desk of leader of the House, and chairman of the standards committee, Tony Newton. Newton's dilemma is excruciating. Should he publish now and face the media music about sleaze — or should he wait until after the election and face the media music about a cover-up?

JUST FANCY THAT!

FOREIGN secretary Malcolm Rifkind's attack on Germany's Euro-ambitions, in which he quoted Martin Luther at them — "Here I stand. I can do no other" — deserves close textual analysis.

As a service to readers, therefore, Lord Gnome reproduces the speech in full as it originally appeared in *The Complete Yes Prime Minister* and was delivered by the Eurosceptic Jim Hacker.

"They've turned our pints into litres and our yards into metres. We gave up the tanner and the threepenny bit, the two bob and half crown. But they cannot and will not destroy the British sausage! Not while I'm here. In the words of Martin Luther: 'Here I stand. I can do no other'."

- *Foot on the Bridgewater Case* *26/27*
- *HP: Members' (Self) Interests* *8*
- *World of Soccer* *9*
- *Hallo! to Olga, Annabel & Magnus* *7*
- *Bogus Doctor in Hackney.* *13*
- *Lowlife Special* *25*

"They're clones"

Street Of Shame

AFTER yet another carpeting by executives at United News and Media, *Express* editor Richard "The Monk" Addis sent a stern memo to his heads of department, warning them that "breaching budget limits will be regarded as a disciplinary matter resulting in dismissal".

There was to be more belt-tightening, closer budget scrutiny and no more carelessness with stories from dodgy sources. "The job is being accurate," quoth Addis.

Whoops! Only days later Addis found himself writing a cheque for a budget-busting £75,000-worth of libel damages to Princess Diana, who was understandably aggrieved to find a totally made-up story in the *Express* alleging that she had made money out of a charity sale. The story, according to his own grovelling apology, turned out to be an "elaborate forgery".

Actually it was nothing of the kind. The "forgery" was an internal memo from Christie's, the auctioneers, which had been printed on out-of-date writing paper — as a few moments' checking would have confirmed. Nevertheless, the story was run at the personal insistence of Addis — who will, of course, now sack himself immediately.

Another *Express*man whose future looks rather shaky is Paul Connew (pronounced "Con You"), a former editor of the *Sunday Mirror* who has been working for Addis as a consultant. It was he whom Addis entrusted with the important task of "standing up" the Diana story, only to see it topple over headfirst shortly after publication.

As if the wretched Addis hadn't enough to worry about, he must now cope with the sudden reappearance of Lord Stevens of Ludgate, who has scarcely been seen or heard of at the Grey Lubyanka since Lord Hollick moved into the driving seat. Stevens, whose wife regards herself as a close friend of Princess Diana, was enraged by the *Express*'s tacky non-scoop, and spent much of last week firing off memos to Addis complaining how useless the paper is.

True enough. But the man responsible is surely the idiot who appointed Addis in the first place. And who was that? Er, step forward, Lord Stevens of Ludgate.

RICHARD "Gorblimey" Littlejohn, that most thoughtful of commentators, is bravely refusing to join the general outrage at the wrongful jailing of the Bridgewater Four.

"While they may be innocent of that particular murder," he announces in the *Mail*, "they were hardly as pure as the driven snow. Society has been fortunate to have them off the streets for the past 18 years... Vincent Hickey and Pat Molloy, who died in prison, were lowlife with criminal associations. If you lie down with dogs, you catch fleas."

Richard speaks from experience, of course. As a young reporter on the *Peterborough Standard* in the mid-1970s, he led a bunch of yobs into a bloody affray during a dance at the local technical college. At his subsequent trial he was described as the orchestrator of the violence.

Instead of getting the long jail-sentence he deserved, Littlejohn was fined £50 and set free to roam the Street of Shame for the next 20 years, terrorising innocent newspaper-readers with his opinions.

Some may think it rather admirable that the liberal do-gooders who run the *Mail* should employ a convicted criminal as their main law 'n' order pundit — proof, perhaps, that even the most hardened thug can be rehabilitated. Littlejohn would not agree. As he told a friend a few years ago, while reminiscing about his life of crime: "They should have flogged and hanged me — it's the only language I understand."

ON Monday last week the *Independent* revealed that Tony Blair was planning to create a new job of minister for Europe. "The advantage for Mr Blair is that it would create an extra key cabinet post with no present shadow incumbent and therefore it could be offered to his loyal campaign manager, Peter Mandelson."

The plan was "currently being worked on in Tony Blair's office by his chief-of-staff, Jonathan Powell". But only two days later, the paper printed a flat denial from Powell, insisting the report was "utterly false".

The story was written by Christian Wolmar, a highly experienced hack who would scarcely have dreamed it up out of thin air. So where could it have originated? It is just the sort of story which is hawked around by a helpful spin doctor on a quiet Sunday when lobby correspondents are scratching around for morsels. Now who could that be?

SERIOUS amnesia has been afflicting the *Daily Mail* as the rag's alumni, both living and deadbeat (and genuinely dead), have been honoured.

At the Savoy Hotel Ann Leslie was given a "lifetime achievement award" by something called the Media Society, and in a moving speech her old boss Sir David English praised the rag as a "family newspaper" staffed entirely by happily-married men and women.

At this several of Leslie's colleagues shifted awkwardly in their seats, including twice-wed *Mail* hacks Peter McHackey and Nigel Dumpster. The paper's owner, Lord Rothermere, looked slightly uncomfortable as well: his guest was the delicious former "hand model" Ms Maiko Lee — who, before he regularised the attachment, was for many years his mistress.

Sir David also boasted that the *Mail* "does not employ any homosexuals — unlike the *Guardian*". Presumably he had forgotten much-loved theatre critic Jack Tinker (decd.), and the very-much-alive showbiz interviewer Lester Middlehurst who, on his very first day in the *Mail*'s employ, was convicted at Brighton magistrates' court of "gross indecency in a public place" with someone who wasn't female.

Tinker, of course, was recently honoured when London theatre critics posthumously gave him the *Theatre Record* Critic of the Year award. They also named an award for the most promising newcomer in his honour.

Naturally the tabloid cashed in on this, and in an article headed "To Jack, a final tribute" it told readers that the award "was received on his behalf by his daughters Victoria and Milly". The daughters were present but the award was actually received by Tinker's long-standing male partner, Adrian Morris. For some reason the rag was reluctant to mention him at all. Could it be that the *Mail*'s fondness for Tinker stretched as far as the publicity he brought the paper, but not as far as his private life?

***SUNDAY Torygraph* hack Bill Jamieson was nervous when he entered editor Dominic Lawson's office to ask for time off to campaign in Putney, where he is the general election candidate for Alan Sked's loony UK Independence Party.**

He expected a bollocking at best and was even prepared to be ejected from Canary Wharf from a great height.

Imagine his surprise and relief, then, at his editor's reaction. "No man," quoth the benevolent Dom, "can have a higher moral duty than to stand for parliament against David Mellor!

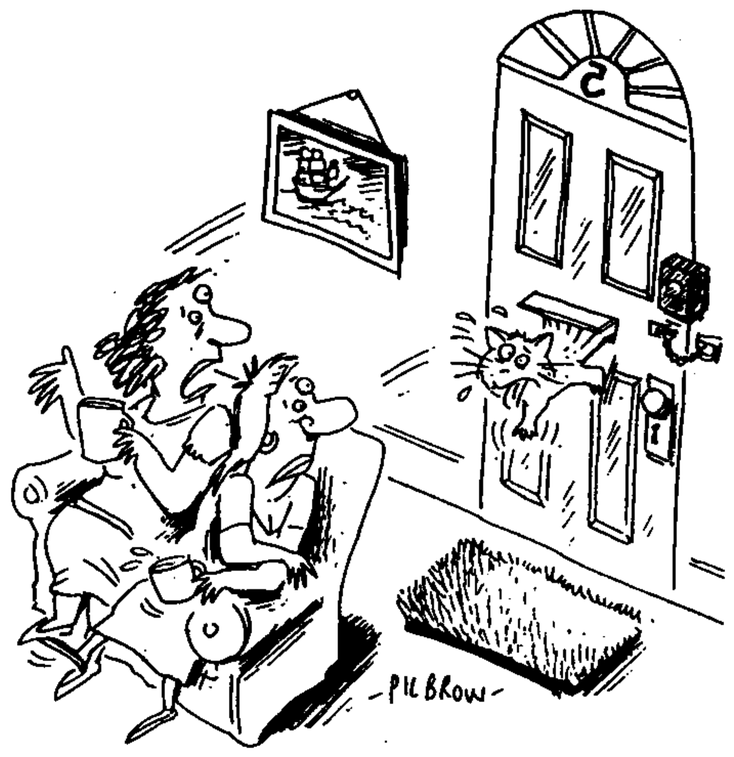
"BRITISH Jews have made an unrivalled contribution to our cultural life," writes Paul "Loonybins" Johnson, in a *Daily Mail* feature celebrating President Weizman's state visit.

"Jews play key roles behind the scenes — witness Sir Jeremy Isaacs's highly successful tenure at Covent Garden, or the Grade family's activities in film and television."

Can this be the same Paul Johnson who has spent the past couple of years denouncing Michael Grade as "Britain's pornographer-in-chief"?

MARJORIE ORR, "Britain's top astrologer", warned Aquarians not to "cut corners or become careless" in her *Express* column of 25 February. "Double-check certain details, no matter how boring it seems," she wrote.

Pity the great soothsayer ignored her own advice. In her "Today's birthdays" slot at the head of the column she noted that Anthony Burgess, novelist and critic, was celebrating his 80th that day. Burgess died in, er, 1993.



"Harold's too mean to install a proper cat flap"

SO FAREWELL then, Chrissy Iley.

The sex-obsessed bimbo, whose ludicrous "Relationship of the Week" pieces were dissected in Hackwatch two weeks ago, was summoned by the *Sunday Times* on the day after the last *Eye* appeared and informed that her column was being dropped.

The reason given — that it didn't fit in with "printing schedules" — sounds most implausible. (Couldn't they simply have given her an earlier deadline?) But Chrissy believes them, bless her innocent heart, so Lord Gnome is happy to disclaim all responsibility for her unfortunate demise.

***GUARDIAN* readers may have been rather puzzled to find almost an entire page of last Saturday's edition given over to a long article by the paper's star feature-writer, Charles Nevin, on an obscure dispute about a 700-yard footpath in the Cotswold village of Blockley.**

Those few readers who persevered beyond the seventh paragraph would have found a small clue: "The editor of this newspaper has a cottage in Blockley. This, to be fearlessly frank, has some bearing on my presence."

Coming soon in your super soaraway *Grauniad*: "EXCLUSIVE: Charles Nevin interviews Alan Rusbridger..."

HACKS at the *Independent on Sunday*, quivering under the regime of David "Rommel" Montgomery, can be thankful they don't work at Bloomberg, the agency that now writes the *Sindie* business pages.

Staff at the Bloomberg office in east London were recently e-mailed and alerted to a visit from Mike Bloomberg himself.

The e-mail warned them: "Please can you make sure that: All coats and jackets are hung in cupboards but not in reception. All papers around printers, fax machines, photocopiers & desks is [sic] tidy. Try to refrain from cooking extra smelly food!!!!"

HOW reassuring to read Sir Alfred Sherman's indignant denial that he is a "Serb empire loyalist" (see Letters page).

With typical modesty, Sir Alfred neglects to add that during the war he was a regular visitor to the Bosnian Serb HQ in Pale, where he acted as a consultant to Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic.

In the end, however, even they found his gung-ho opinions too extreme for their taste. As Sherman confessed sadly to the *Guardian* last year, he became disillusioned when the wimpish Serb commanders ignored his exhortations to "go on the offensive".

COURT & CIRCULAR

LORD Avebury, the former Liberal MP who chairs the parliamentary human rights group, was rather surprised to hear that the Prince of Wales was planning a goodwill visit to Bahrain.

Avebury himself had been invited to Bahrain in 1994 but his invitation was abruptly rescinded without explanation.

In league with human rights groups all over the world, Avebury and his group have campaigned against the awful dictatorship in Bahrain. In a letter on 16 January to the prince's private secretary — former foreign office official Stephen Lamport (see Scott inquiry index) — Avebury asked for a meeting to discuss, among other things, the disbanding by the amir of Bahrain of all democratic institutions over the last 22 years; the imprisonment of hundreds of dissenters; the systematic torture of prisoners who refuse to give information to government intelligence; etc etc. Avebury sent Prince Charles a packet of damning reports about Bahrain from Amnesty International, the UN Human Rights Commission, the BBC and Bahraini exiles in Britain.

There was no reaction and no meeting. Whether the prince even read the material in his restful moments on the royal yacht Britannia is doubtful. When he got to Bahrain he spent a whole morning parading himself for the lickspittle media and the whole afternoon having tea with and sucking up to the amir.

WHEN the *Times* reported that Buckingham Palace was going kosher for the visit of the Israeli head of state, President Weizman, cooking honours went to "Tony Page, London's leading Jewish caterer".

Page is used to catering high-powered events: he also serves Jewish guests at Downing Street and the residences of Lord Young, Lord Harris and Gerald Ronson. Of course, the queen and her lords received an unruffled and utterly kosher service — completely unaware of the seething world of intrigue which lies behind the professional calm.

Saucy evidence of Ugandan discussions taking place in bathrooms, rather than kosher discussions in kitchens, has been doing the rounds in Jewish catering circles. The rumoured lewd behaviour must have particularly delighted Andrew and Carole Sobell, who run a rival kosher food firm, Schaverien, for which Tony Page used to work before he broke away to form his own firm.

Since then Schaverien has been in financial trouble and has now gone into receivership. Needless to say, no love is lost between the rivals.

I-I-I SPECIAL

THIS week's Kim Il Sung Memorial Award for Promotion of Self goes to respected financial helmswoman Nicola Horlick.

Her review of the book *City Lives* by Cathy Courtney and Paul Thompson (*Sunday Times*, 16 Feb) contained a mere 26 references to the great reviewer herself compared to three mentions of the book in question. Of the five quotations cited from the book, the final one mentions Horlick herself: "She has the utmost respect of her team," it says.

HALLO! THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

HALLO! THREE cheers for Lady Olga Maitland!! The terribly grand Tory MP for Sutton and Cheam has become a champion of the people!

Her commuting constituents — bedevilled by the privatised rail service to London run by Connex Trains, which offers daily cancellations, delays and litter-filled carriages at no extra cost — wondered why their MP was so quiet on the matter. But as a supporter of privatisation, what *could* she say?

But that was until milady actually took the train to the House. She suffered such long delays after her train was cancelled twice that she was outraged and decided to call a constituency meeting on the matter. The meeting, she stresses, has nothing to do with *privatisation*, of course: it is merely concerned with the very poor service on the, er, privatised rail line.

HALLO! WE ladies who lunch are sometimes accused of fragrantly wafting through life without a thought for the "nitty gritty" of everyday existence. Nothing could be further from the truth!

I am full of admiration for Lady Annabel Goldsmith, who has been pounding the pavements and pressing the flesh in Putney, in support of her husband Sir Jammy Fishpaste's election campaign. What could be nittier or grittier than that?

Apparently the response to Lady Annabel has been "*awfully* good". With Lady Annabel by his side, Sir Jams will be unstoppable, I tell you.

HALLO! *IT'S quiz time! Here's a question worth putting to any Mastermind contestant taking the environment as specialist subject: Should a titled landowner be paid £129,000 out of public funds not to cut down trees? Former quizmaster and chairman of Scottish Natural Heritage Magnus Magnusson has the answer himself: "Yes, indeedy!"*

Magnus's committee has awarded that sum to my friend Lord Strathnaver, who will now restrain himself from chopping down Balblair Wood at Loch Fleet on his Sutherland estate, thus safeguarding "the only truly viable one-flow wintergreen plants remaining in the country", according to the SNH.

Coincidentally, "Strathie" is himself a member of SNH's regional board. He is not, alas, to be reappointed to his £5,179 a year post. No doubt the £129,000 will console him somewhat.

O·B·N·K

"We can bet that Bill Gates will be remembered five centuries from now... if our civilisation is still flourishing in 2500, Gates will be considered one of the prominent figures in its development."

FRANCOIS NAUDIN
The European

Contributor: L. White

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

HALLO! LONDON sophisticates have long known the Rheingold Club, off Oxford Street, as a welcoming sort of place with a charming, old-style 1950s atmosphere. I have always felt its reputation as a tacky after-hours last resort for squiffy men in suits who have been turned away from Stringfellow's to be so unfair.

So I was charmed to receive an invitation from Christopher Ager, the Rheingold's chairman and artistic director, inviting me to invest in the refurbishment of "the meeting place for stars of stage and screen".

Although Christopher's prospectus admits that the club, opened in 1959, is in something of a "time warp", with its wooden beams, wrought ironwork and waterfall, he is confident that with the support of "mature and affluent" investors such as myself he will be able to turn a loss into turnover of more than £1m with profits approaching £700,000 by 1999!

Let's hope he can, for he needs the cash! His £15,000 Jaguar was seized by bailiffs last month over a silly misunderstanding about money owed to someone, and another silly misunderstanding has meant that his cleaners are pursuing the club for payment of more than £2,000!

The Marquesa urges all her friends to rally round — and hopes to meet them soon for a drink in the Rheingold's "Rendez-vous" Bar!

"I don't think you've quite got the hang of this '60s revival thing, Kevin!"

HALLO! **WHAT an old romantic is my dashing friend Jonathan Aitken! He certainly knows how to combine business and pleasure.**

The South Thanet MP found time in his busy schedule the other day to open the new office of the English Rose dating agency at "Romance House" in Broadstairs. The company is certainly doing its bit for exports — with 7,000 singles on its books it specialises in introducing British women to American men!

"MPs do all sorts of things on Friday afternoons," he says, candidly, "but this is somewhat different. This is a successful small business which has been growing steadily. It provides an honourable and respectable service which is clearly needed in the 20th century."

Absolutely. Why don't they extend their service by introducing British women to Arab men? Or has someone else already cornered this market?

'The Marquesa'

IN THE TEAROOM

AT a council of war held after the Wirral by-election, John Major allowed himself to be talked into fighting the general election all on his own.

Intriguing new research was at hand to show that the government's record, nearly all of its senior ministers — even the Conservative party itself — are, er, serious electoral handicaps this time round. On all the hot-button topics, the voters in key marginals prefer Labour. Except for one: Mr & Mrs Swing-Voter do not, it seems, readily take to that oily Tony Blair.

This is according to the new breed of Tory number-crunchers who have abandoned the rigour of conventional polling for the psephological equivalent of astrology. Their system involves asking focus groups daft questions such as: "If John Major were a biscuit, what kind of biscuit would he be?"

The prime minister turns out to be a Hob Nob — oaty, conventionally-English, a safe choice; while Blair is a Bath Oliver — a deeply pretentious biscuit; a toff trying to look plain. The Labour leader figured even lower in the public estimation when the researchers got into the bathroom. The question: "What kind of toilet paper do you think Tony Blair would use?" got the cynical reply: "He'd *say* he uses recycled, but he really uses Andrex." All this has convinced the Tories to fight a presidential-style campaign, sidelining the issues and inviting the voter to choose between the two on the basis of "character".

No one is keener that Major should assume total responsibility for the campaign than Michael Heseltine. But why? Does he seriously believe that Honest John can pull it off, or, at least, put up a good enough performance to neutralise the leadership ambitions of Redwood and Portillo? Or does he have a darker motive for wanting to send his boss into the jungle alone?

'Urquhart'

Benn Behaving Madly

PRE-ELECTION manoeuvring by Tory candidates continues to be stunningly feeble — particularly in the case of Nirj Deva, the Tory MP for Brentford and Isleworth, who needs to find a better way to infiltrate the enemy camp — and a better liar to do it for him.

His Labour challenger, Ann Keen, was hosting a Commons meeting for young Labour supporters when she was surprised to spot a chap named Ben among her audience. As it happened, she had been introduced to Ben an hour or two earlier in the Commons Central Lobby — as a parliamentary researcher for Mr Deva.

When she challenged Ben he declared that he had come to defect to Labour. When Ms Keen raised an eyebrow at such sudden conversion he changed his story and said he had, er, come to "measure the room" for another meeting later on. With all eyes on him the red-faced mole fell silent and fled.

Meanwhile a recent phone-in on Radio Gloucester had Labour's prospective parliamentary candidate for the Forest of Dean, Diana Organ, answering constituents' questions. One caller announced himself as "Paul from Mitcheldean", but the quick-witted Organ recognized the man's genteel tones and insisted he reveal his surname.

It was none other than Paul Marsland, Tory MP for West Gloucestershire, who will be fighting the Forest seat against Organ in the forthcoming election. Marsland had been invited on the phone-in but had turned the offer down. Obviously he felt the Tory message was better put across anonymously.

Members' (Self) Interests

DESPITE the hype from Lord Nolan and Sir Gordon Downey, the new register of MPs' interests is as absurd and shocking as its predecessor. It continues to disguise far more than it reveals.

Its basic flaw is the dispensation it gives MPs not to disclose the amounts of money they receive from their paymasters — except for "the provision of services in his or her capacity as a member of parliament". This meaningless phrase is seized on by countless MPs who do not reveal how much money they get for their "remunerated directorships". So the entries give a wholly false picture of what is going on.

Labour's Roy Hattersley, for instance, who is retiring this year anyway, has been widely attacked for the £110,000 he honestly declares for his journalism, which has little do with his being an MP. In the same way, Jack Aspinwall, Tory MP for Wansdyke, declares £45,000 for three big consultancies (Rentokil, British Gas and BAA), and Harold Elletson (Tory MP for Blackpool North and an agent for MI6) declares four huge consultancies worth £60,000 (BP, Rothmans, Omega and Nanquest Defence Products).

But this is chicken feed compared to the pay-outs for directorships to former Tory ministers. Kenneth Baker, for instance, declares directorships of Hanson, Bell Cablemania, MTT plc, the Blackstone Group, Wavetek corporation and Milennium Chemicals, and an advisership to ICL and Mercury. Yet he reveals not a penny received from any of these companies.

The only clue to the amounts comes from the entry of another Tory MP, the prime minister's close friend Robert Atkins, who also says he is an adviser to ICL, but, unlike Baker, declares how much it brings him: £30,000. Baker's hundreds of thousands of undeclared pounds are mirrored in the entries for his former colleagues in government: Sir Archie Hamilton, former armed forces minister, who declares £45,000 for various consultancies but declares not a penny for his directorship of Siam Selective Growth Trust or the First Philippine Investment Trust or Crownridge Industries or his consultancy with Litton Industries.

First Philippine Investment Trust obviously needs to pay two former ministers, so former chancellor Norman Lamont also declares a directorship there without telling us how much he gets — any more than he declares any sums for his boardroom activities at Taiwan Investment Trust, Jupiter European Trust, East European Food Fund plc, Indonesia Fund, Archipelago Fund investment trust and the Balli Group, not to mention his consultancy with Monsanto.

Former agriculture secretary Ian MacGregor declares three directorships for hugely rich companies — Associated British Foods, Slough Estates and Unigate — without disclosing how much they pay him; and the greediest of them all, David Mellor, reveals the usual host of interests without declaring a single penny. "The existence of these contracts," he declares "is not dependent in any way on my being an MP." Then he pulls the other one. An interesting addition to the famous Mellor Consultancies is one from Biwater International, "a water treatment company". The chairman of Biwater, Adrian White, is a governor of the BBC where Mellor receives fees for what he declares as "participating in radio and television programmes". Biwater has a preference for former foreign office ministers like Mellor. It also pays another friend of the prime minister, Tristan Garel-Jones, though he won't say how much.

Perhaps the most lucrative entry in the whole book is the shortest. Former foreign secretary Douglas Hurd declares only a directorship of National Westminster Bank and the deputy chairmanship of Natwest Markets. The payments he gets for these are not declared, though they have been rumoured to be not a million pounds short of a quarter of a million pounds.

Natwest Markets has been much in the news lately. A nasty little £50m "black hole" has opened up in the accounts after some neat fiddling from one of the bank's most brilliant derivatives traders.

ANOTHER loophole continues to create many potential conflicts of interest by allowing parliamentary private secretaries (PPSs) to keep their noses in the trough — even though they are on the first rung of the ministerial ladder and have access to all departmental papers and often sensitive data.

As the *Eye* can reveal, the current batch of PPSs are no different:

● Simon Coombs (PPS to Ian Lang, trade and industry secretary): consultant to Blick plc, a telefusion communications company; and AIM UK, a technology trade association.

● Charles Goodson-Wickes (George Young, transport secretary): director of Thomas Greg Ltd, a transport and security printing firm; and consultant to lobbying outfit Chelgate Ltd.

● Geoffrey Clifton-Brown (Douglas Hogg, agriculture minister): farmer and owner of agricultural holdings in Norfolk and Gloucestershire.

● Richard Spring (Tim Eggar, DTI minister of state): economic consultant to Malabar Capital Ltd and Malabar Unit Trusts.

Even James Couchman — in the pay of the booze (Gin and Vodka Association) and drugs (Pfizer Ltd) lobby — is allowed to be PPS to Tony Newton, who as leader of the Commons is in charge of the timing and progress of all government legislation.

FISHPASTE NEWS

SIR Jammy Fishpaste's plans for world domination have suffered yet another setback. The Marmite-scented megalomaniac is trying to have 3.5 million copies of a pre-election video duplicated in London and then sent to households in marginal seats — but without much success.

Sir Jams will have to shell out 85p per video duplicated and dispatched. He wants the job done in a fortnight, which is nigh on impossible considering the number of tapes involved.

If he can't get the tapes copied in time, he will have 3.5 million printed boxes lying around gathering dust. These are being made already by a firm called Rexam in Darlington. He has also commissioned Label Print Services, a company in the East End of London, to print 3.5 million labels.

What is on the tape? Goldfinger's henchmen insist that everyone involved in the project must sign a confidentiality clause, on pain of being fed to the piranhas.

Since the star of the video is probably Sir James Goldeneye himself, it is almost certain to be unsuitable for children, and may well contravene the law against sending obscene articles through the post.

'Backbiter'

NOOKS and CORNERS

THE Cringle Street pumping station stands in the shadow of poor old Battersea power station, that forlorn symbol of Thatcherite free enterprise half-demolished by her friend John Broome before he went bust.

The pumping station is a solid, handsome brick structure with an iron roof built by the Southwark Water Company between 1839 and 1856, and is listed grade II. It is now owned by Parkview International, the company which wants to turn the power station into a gigantic "leisure centre" and to develop the surrounding land. And it is in the way.

The pumping station is eminently reusable and, besides, in the legal agreement with Wandsworth borough council, Parkview is obliged to provide 10,000 sq ft of community space. Yet in its master plan, Arup Associates fails to incorporate the building into the scheme and proposes no use for it.

And English Heritage? Well, the head of the Kensington & South London team has written to Parkview: "English Heritage accepts that it is most unlikely that the former Cringle Street pumping station could be retained within the development. If its replacement clearly contributed to the wider benefit of the development and above all, the reuse of the power station, we would not oppose its demolition." So one listed building is to be sacrificed to try to make a Hong Kong developer do the right thing by another. Thus are we served.

AND here is another example of English Heritage's guardianship of London's industrial heritage: the Channel tunnel rail link bill has now received royal assent.

This means that not only can the ineffable Sir Norman Foster have his way with St Pancras station with impunity, but also that exemption from listed building control has been granted for 13 structures, permitting demolition or partial demolition of 11 of them and extension or alteration of two others. Buildings like the extraordinary German Gymnasium, with its laminated timber roof of the 1860s, can now be mutilated.

But the main casualty will be the gasholders behind St Pancras and King's Cross. These monumental filigree iron structures provide a wonderful backdrop to the view looking north, and make the King's Cross railway lands a most remarkable industrial landscape. They are also of rare historical significance, being the oldest operation group of gasholders in Britain. In the "triplet" group, No 11 dates from 1861 and No 12 from 1867. And now London & Continental Railways enjoy the freedom to dismantle all but one of them — three listed and three unlisted.

And this has happened because English Heritage has simply given away St Pancras and King's Cross (Eyes 912 & 913) — for purely political reasons. After all, nothing must interfere with the government's favourite private finance initiative, must it, Sir Jocelyn? At the House of Lords select committee, English Heritage only put a feeble case about St Pancras station itself; at the earlier House of Commons hearings the quango offered no evidence at all.

Of course for important railway works sacrifices must be made — but they must be necessary ones. It is true that the deal done with English Heritage allows the gasholders to be reerected somewhere on the site, but not near the surviving example where they might have significance. And the original holder tanks will be destroyed — one dating back to the 1850s. At a recent public inquiry into the Rome Street gasholder in Carlisle, EH successfully argued that the holder tank was of importance. But at King's Cross it was only last year that English Heritage bothered to investigate the history of the gasholders.

So will the land currently occupied by the wretched things be used for the railway? Well, sort of. Some of it might, of course, come in handy for an enabling commercial development. At present the 140-acre site is only valued at £10 million because of all those tiresome listed buildings and conservation areas. But when statutory protection is lifted, it all becomes worth rather more and London & Continental and the treasury have agreed to split the profits 50:50. That is what the private finance initiative is all about.

'Piloti'

WORLD OF SOCCER

"HODGSON Plans to Bring Ince", announced a headline in the sports pages of last week's *Mail on Sunday*. If Roy Hodgson, the new manager of Blackburn Rovers, really does intend to bring Paul Ince with him from Milan to Ewood Park this summer, the story ought to be front-page news.

For Paul Ince is of course black — and, as the *Mail on Sunday* well knows, Blackburn Rovers are famous throughout Europe as the only all-white English premiership side. The former champions have not fielded a black player in a first-team home game since the steel tycoon Jack Walker took control of the club in 1991.

Walker and his chairman, Robert Coar, failed to sign England coach Terry Venables when Rovers were languishing at the bottom of the table last autumn. It was rumoured at the time that El Tel had rejected the "money no object" offer to run the team because the club had refused his request to sign Trevor Sinclair, a black player.

Venables denied it, but the rumour — however unfounded — provoked a deluge of approving messages to the "brfc.supporters.org.uk" website from racist soccer fans all over Europe. Netheads from as far away as Norway and Germany congratulated Blackburn on maintaining a team that didn't look as if it had been "partly picked in Botswana". More than one of the messages was signed "Adolf Hitler".

"Lee", the brfc web-master, admitted to the *Independent on Sunday* last December that he had received some "pretty hot" e-mail from neo-Nazis. "Perhaps," he ruminated, "when Rovers finally field a black player these people will go away." Jack Walker assured the *Sindie* that "if we want to play black people we play black people. There is no colour bar."

A quest! I am looking for my lady though we have yet to meet this time around. She is beautiful, compassionate, meditative and visionary, and her soul sparkles with an ancient wisdom. She is possibly a practitioner of the healing arts, or a dancer, and she is definitely a light worker. I am 45, vegetarian, spiritual, sensitive and currently biding my time as a successful massage practitioner. My interests and delights include: meditation, people, nature, truth, healing, finding a point of balance, empowerment, communication, trust, tantra, transformation, tenderness, vulnerability, making a difference, generosity of spirit, keeping fit, fun, laughter, movement and moonbeams. If you have magic in your eyes, a playful heart, yearn to touch the divine stillness within, and long to create a love filled relationship with a fellow soul, you could be the lady that I seek. Would you like to be my friend, my lover, my soulmate?

Photo with letter ensures reply.

Personal Column
Brighton and Hove Leader

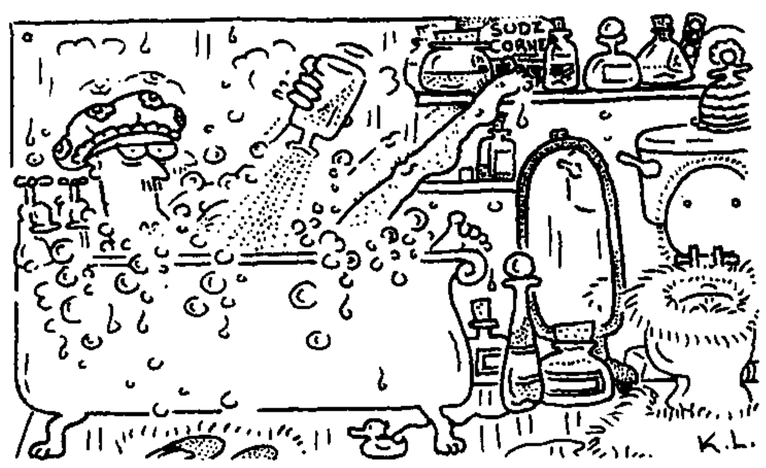
Sadly, it was coming to an end. I felt I wanted to sit quietly with John [Galliano], somewhere in the middle of Paris, probably in a small cafe and share lots of laughs and experiences. John is a wise and caring man and I was happy to have met him... Thank you, John, for being so long-suffering during my first interview and for giving me an insight into the world of fashion and make-believe. We must all keep dreaming.

SARAH, DUCHESS OF YORK
Hello! Magazine

Pseuds Corner

New half, new story. Not even the original Zola could have devised as dramatic a plot shift as this. But then that Zola was all J'accuse and not Mark Hughes.

HENRY WINTER
Daily Telegraph



It is easy to be snide about the lengths Chatwin would go to acquire, say, a few cakes of very, very special French soap. But quality of soap is a measure of the civilisation that manufactures it and retails it and uses it. This was something Chatwin understood profoundly and expressed with great sweetness and precision. As he wrote, about Afghanistan: "On the streets of Herat you saw men in mountainous turbans, strolling hand in hand, with roses in their mouths and rifles wrapped in flowered chintz."

FIONA MacCARTHY
The Observer

The ability to talk is a gift that no other creature on this planet shares. It gives us the power to make people laugh, cry, think and wonder.

So why do we sometimes find it so difficult? Why are we often stuck for words?

Conversation, like most things, is a skill that can be learnt. With this in mind BT created TalkWorks. A specially commissioned book is now available which, for the first time, brings together the world's leading knowledge and experience on how to have more rewarding conversations.

BT Advertisement

Life was not easy for Frank Sinatra, or for anyone who stood beside him. Although the armies of his heart and mind did frequent battle and left him isolated and restless, in matters of conscience and of human hope, they were one.

MIA FARROW
Daily Mail

CONTRIBUTORS: S. Baynton-Power, P. Hylander, C. Kendall, A. Barker, A. Robertson, J. James.

£10 paid for entries

EYE TV

No Child Of Mine (Meridian)

IN David Lodge's novel about Catholicism, *How Far Can You Go?*, a young girl gives herself a thrill by telling more and more lurid untruths about her sexual behaviour in the confessional — up to and including masturbation with a crucifix — until one day, the author notes, "close questioning from a sceptical Jesuit" finds her out and she flees the confessional in tears.

Peter Kosminsky's harrowing and contentious drama-documentary **No Child Of Mine** brought this story to mind for two reasons. The first is that the genre of drama-documentary has told ever more lurid stories over the years until, with this one, it was perhaps finally found out under close questioning. The second is that the source of the film itself is a girl who may have embellished for effect.

When a drama-documentary knocks on your door, it always brings a policeman along and *No Child Of Mine* had two. The first copper was a continuity announcement. "Now — *No Child Of Mine*, which portrays the effects of sexual abuse on children and which some viewers may find upsetting. The number of a confidential help-line will be given at the end." The second policeman was a caption which, now that the film's basic good intentions had been declared, tackled the question of veracity: "This is a true story. Names, dates and locations have been changed to protect the identity of a child."

In the long decade of debate over the drama-documentary's claim to be "truth", few had imagined that a new ethical dilemma could be introduced. *No Child Of Mine*, though, had achieved this. Traditionally — as in last December's *Hillsborough* — the opening caption declares that everything in the film is true except the bits that aren't. Kosminsky was saying that everything in the film was true but that, if viewers had any doubts about it, he was unable to allay them for ethical and legal reasons.

What the viewer saw was a catalogue of scarcely imaginable horrors visited on one young girl, "Kerry". Sexually abused by her father and required to perform cunnilingus on her mother, she was also lent out by her dad to his mates in settlement of gambling debts. When her mum threw out her dad after a row, she was raped by her step-father and used as a sexual plaything in the games that followed his dinner parties. She ran back to her natural father, who promptly put her on the street as a prostitute: "£25 for a handjob, £30 for a blowjob." Helped by a sympathetic teacher, Kerry was taken to a children's home, where she was raped by a social worker and befriended by a local pimp at the home's gates, who put her on the game again.

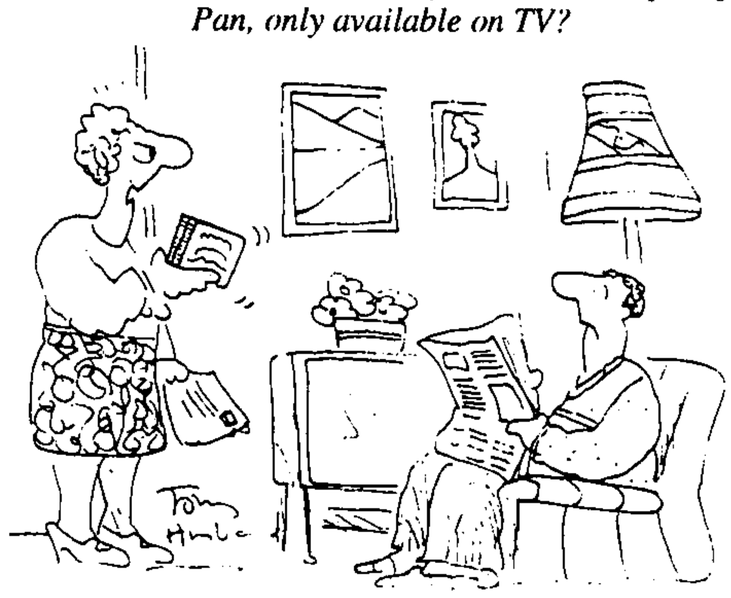
To many viewers it will have seemed incredible that all of this could have happened to one child, and a director of social services subsequently suggested that it might indeed be incredible. Claiming to recognise the actual case history behind the play, the welfare director revealed that the victim had been shown to have a history of inventing lurid stories to gain attention. Now *No Child Of Mine* lies in a limbo of compromised credibility which can never be properly resolved. Because of his own promises of anonymity, Kosminsky cannot release the documentary basis for the script. Because of legal restrictions on the identifying of minors, journalists are unable to investigate the case satisfactorily, are in fact unable even to name the welfare authority which has questioned the film. It's a bit like the story of the boy who cried wolf, but with the new twist that the boy has managed to get a D-notice on what he shouted.

It has to be said that *No Child Of Mine* was not luridly or exploitatively filmed or written, although parents may feel that they would have allowed no daughter of theirs to play the grubby and upsetting scenes in which 13-year-old Brooke Kinsella was involved. There was also something pious about that fact that the single non-abusive male character was the only black one. But the one insurmountable problem was the question of credibility.

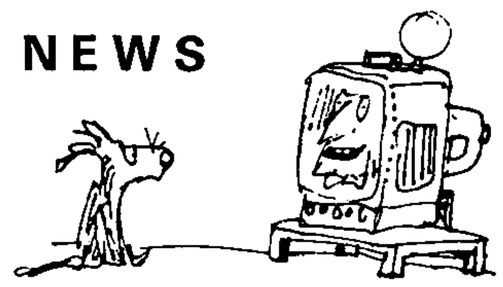
Kosminsky is an honourable and talented man but *No Child Of Mine* brought the form of drama-documentary into near-fatal disrepute by taking it into the arena of unverifiable events. The controversy over provenance allowed those who belong to the ostrich tendency on child abuse to suggest that most such claims are exaggerated. Meanwhile, sympathetic liberals will have found the project simply too artistically flawed to support. The only winners were Britain's paedophiles and child-abusers, settling back with one hand on the freeze-frame button for a good night in.

'Square Eyes'

"The other night when you got drunk, did you order 'Tender Love Tunes' by the Tibetan Pipes of Pan, only available on TV?



MEDIA NEWS



BBC managers have at last admitted what everyone has known for ages: the audience for John Birt's latest mad dream — 24 hour rolling TV news — will be tiny. Meanwhile, the scale of sackings needed to pay for it is becoming clear: more than 50 jobs will go as budgets are cut by a third.

Programmes like the *Nine O'clock News* are bearing the brunt, but posts are also being cut in radio and at the Beeb's not-overstaffed-for-very-much-longer political unit at Millbank. Managers' claims that *more* jobs would be created ring hollow.

At their last meeting BBC governors rubber-stamped Birt's plans but failed to agree a budget. As a result, it's been impossible to set staffing levels or organise accommodation for staff and equipment. Some managers are privately worried about being able to launch the channel, as promised, in October.

The news service will only be available on digital TV, so viewers will have to spend hundreds of pounds for decoders to receive it. Tony Hall, boss of the news division, recently admitted that the target audience for rolling news was just 1 percent of those with a decoder. But this may be 1 percent of nowt: set top boxes for cable and satellite have only been attractive when major sports or movies have been thrown in. Digital TV offers neither. Despite this, Hall said that more than 10 percent of the corporation's news budget will be wasted on the channel.

Aside from whether anyone will be watching, hacks worry about the demands the service will place on bi-media "news correspondents" already expected to fill endless hours of "rolling news" on Radio Five Live. One recent management buzz phrase is "rethinking the definition of quality" — a coded recognition that with resources spread so thin the star rating of the output is likely to fall drastically.

TONY "Head Prefect" Hall, head of BBC News, has had a brilliant money-saving idea. The *One O'Clock News*, *Six O'Clock News* and *Nine O'Clock News* are now to be produced by the same people.

Under Hall's inspirational leadership, the three programmes have been concocted by three separate teams, each of which was encouraged to regard the others as the enemy. It was a hugely expensive arrangement, leading to spectacular cock-ups and frequent, violent battles for possession of a story.

Now it is to be one newsroom for all — just as it was in the bad old days before young Tony Hall emerged from the corporation's training school to help John Birt lick BBC journalism into shape!

■ AN urgent message to staff of Central TV: would the author of "Emily's Lists" please contact the *Eye*? Discretion guaranteed.

A SHAKE-UP OF THE TODAY PROGRAMME IS SCHEDULED...
AS THE CURRENT PRESENTERS ARE DEEMED TO GREY...
ON AIR
OVERPAID...
& MIDDLE-AGED...
LEAVING NO ALTERNATIVE BUT FOR THEM TO GO...
AND JOIN THE MANAGEMENT!
BBC
Ken Pyne

THE *Eye*'s disclosures about rum goings-on at Anglia TV — beleaguered fenland outpost of puritanical Lord "Alco" Hollick's media empire — have triggered a huge witch-hunt.

Personnel officer Peter "Sneer" Meier, known as the Great Dictator because of his demonic charm, little moustache and staring eyes, went "absolutely apeshit" when he saw the *Eye*'s story about the mystery sacking of shaven-headed TV director Martin Lord, the sensitive artiste responsible for the pisspoor *Vanessa* chatshow.

He had warned the few remaining staff that they would be fired if Lord's departure were mentioned. With Hollick henchman Malcolm Wall (now transferred to the *Express*) and Wall's drinking pal Graham Creelman, the alleged managing director of Anglia, Sneer has organised a large-scale but unsuccessful search for the leaker.

Too late, we fear. Hacks from the *News of the Screws*, who were already swarming all over Norfolk in pursuit of the real reason for Lord's hasty exit, have now extended their inquiries to cover the private and professional lives of other Anglia executives. They are showing particular interest in a raucous late-night party held at a Norwich flat, which was greatly enlivened when an energetic and statuesque blonde treated revellers to a "lingerie exhibition". One of the male guests, showing a fine disregard for the winter chill, insisted on wearing a pair of skimpy shorts.

Meanwhile, back at the Anglia office, morale continues to plummet. The photo of 18-stone Vanessa Feltz in the foyer was recently embellished with a biro moustache and beard. An enraged Sneer rapidly mobilised a cleaning squad, which was not entirely successful: the Big One now looks as though she has a five o'clock shadow. Oddly enough, it rather improves her.

TACKWATCH: THE SUNDAY MIRROR

DISLOYAL hacks at the *Sunday Mirror* tell a delightful story about a conversation between their new editor, Bridget Rowe, and a hapless minion on the art desk.

Bridget: "Can you smell my *****?"

Minion (puzzled): "Er, no, boss."

Bridget: "Well you should. Cos I had a **** this morning and it was so good I didn't want to **** it out."

Unfortunately the story cannot possibly be true: the language is far too clean. Bridget is a no-nonsense type who calls a **** a **** and a **** a ****, if only to prove that a female tabloid editor can be just as foul-mouthed and shocking as Kelvin Mackenzie.

Her outspokenness seems to have infected her chief lieutenant, the very dim but extremely camp Paul Bennett. At a recent "planning meeting", Bennett startled senior Mirror Group executives by suddenly declaring: "I don't care what you heterosexuals say, but I give the best ****-jobs in London." Bridget beamed at him like a proud mother watching her son's nativity play.

Other staff at Canary Wharf are less impressed by her eccentric management methods. During the past year or so, while Bridget was managing director of both the *Sunday Mirror* and its chief rival, the *People*, the *Mirror* managed to get through at least half a dozen editors or acting editors — Tessa Hilton, Bridget Rowe herself (a brief interregnum), Jim Cassidy, Bill Bradshaw, Paul Connew and Amanda Platell. This is a pretty high turnover rate even by Fleet Street standards. A couple of weeks ago the merry-go-round started up yet again, as Bridget ousted the "killer bimbo" Amanda Platell and installed herself as editor once more.

Her first achievement was to get rid of the paper's best hacks, including news editor Chris Boffey, deputy news editor Gordon Hay, features editor Clive Nelson, deputy features editor Dave Robertson and crime reporter Kim Sengupta. To save herself having to pay them off, she announced that they weren't being sacked, merely "redeployed". All five have been sitting at home ever since, waiting vainly to discover what they are supposed to do.

The absence of experienced staff may explain the cock-ups that have plagued the paper since then. In her first week as editor, she splashed a story about Jerry Hayes MP and an Aids test — which produced an instant writ from the MP. The next Sunday, her front-page scoop was a photo of Rod Stewart in New York, arm-in-arm with an unidentified woman who was clearly not his wife: WHO'S THE MYSTERY BLONDE WITH ROD?

That, at least, was the headline on the first edition. But it soon transpired that the man in the picture wasn't Rod Stewart, and that he was threatening to sue over the suggestion of an extra-marital canoodle. Unable to drop the front-page picture, Bridget had to content herself with altering the text, producing one of the most feeble and absurd headlines ever seen on the front of a Sunday tabloid: WHO'S THE MYSTERY BLONDE WITH THE MYSTERY BLONDE?

FREEDOM of speech might seem to be a basic requirement for hacks working in that bastion of journalistic independence, the BBC World Service. But not, apparently, in its Vietnamese language section.

The section head, Chris Greene, has recently recruited two broadcasters from the Vietnamese government's propaganda mouthpiece, Voice of Vietnam, to come to Bush House for two months' work experience. He pledged that they would be bound by the same rules as the rest of the section, upholding the BBC's proud traditions of objectivity.

A couple of weeks ago one of the visitors, Dang Van Thuong, was asked to translate and read on the air a comment from the International Labour Organisation which was heavily critical of the Vietnamese government. As everyone except Greene knew he would, Dang declined, citing "difficulties". Greene did not insist.

It might be asked what the BBC can possibly gain by hiring staff from a station such as the Voice of Vietnam. Perhaps Greene hopes that the Vietnamese government, overwhelmed with gratitude, will let the BBC set up a news bureau there. If so, he is in a minority of one. Meanwhile, the benefits to the Vietnamese government will presumably include a comprehensive dossier on the emigrés who form the backbone of the BBC's operation.

Greene barely knew where Vietnam was when he took charge three years ago. However, he does fit in well with the BBC's dynastic traditions: his late dad, Sir Hugh Greene, was director-general in the 1960s; and his brother is a close friend of Elizabeth Wright, head of the Asia Pacific region, who appointed him to the job.

The current problems within the Vietnamese section are merely the latest in a series of disasters that have befallen the BBC's Far Eastern service lately. Only a few weeks ago, a producer in the Chinese section, Jiang-Hua Berkenbusch, was attacked by a colleague with a razor blade. This was one of several violent incidents which have puzzled and alarmed Lorna Ball, head of the section. If she bothered to consult her staff, she would discover the all-too-obvious political and cultural reasons: the men don't want to work for women, the people from socialist China are at loggerheads with those from Taiwan and Hong Kong, and in the best Confucian traditions the older members demand strict obedience from the younger ones.

Instead, Ms Ball reacted to the crisis as any good Birtist would: she called in a team of management consultants.

***WORLD in Action*'s much-publicised programme about prisons director Derek Lewis was a coup for the Granada programme. The programme was initially taken to the Beeb by *World in Action*'s former editor Ray Fitzwalter, who now runs his own production company.**

Panorama rejected it, however, and insisted this was a purely editorial decision. But insiders say that the rejection had more to do with Fitzwalter's insistence that Lewis receive a £7,000 appearance fee. The BBC disagreed with the payment, especially because Lewis had written a book which would undoubtedly benefit from his exposure on television.

World in Action was not so fussy and did not mind that Ray Fitzwalter Associates eventually paid Lewis a fee of around £4,000 for appearing on the programme.

PS: Fitzwalter and Lewis are old chums from the former prison service director's days at Granada Television.

LEGAL NEWS

DOES the solicitor-general Sir Derek Spencer have friends among the sub-editors in the legal publishing houses?

The question arises from the report in a recent issue of *All England Law Reports for 1997*, where the case of the attorney general v Mirror Group Newspapers and others is set out in full.

The case, in which the newspapers were accused of contempt of court over the coverage of alleged assaults by Geoff Knights, boyfriend of Gillian Taylforth, was an unmitigated disaster for the government. Judges Schiemann and Smedley threw out all the allegations of contempt and awarded the enormous costs against the attorney-general (ie the taxpayer).

Ungenerous observers ascribed at least some of the result to the not entirely over-impressive performance of the chief lawyer for the attorney-general, solicitor-general Sir Derek. Imagine their surprise when the *All England Law Reports* listed only *two* lawyers representing the attorney in the case: Philip Havers QC and Hugo Keith. Not a single mention of the self-effacing Sir Derek.

BUSY times are predicted for *Observer* lawyers after the paper's magazine, in a piece about the career of Page Three bosoms Samantha Fox, managed to get its Hollywood actors mixed up with its mass murderers in north London.

"A *Sun* photographer who was in the area, scouting out the garden where Leslie Nielsen had buried his murder victims, was asked by his picture desk if he couldn't also locate this Fox kid, which he did," the mag reported.

No doubt Dennis Nilsen, mass murderer, is even now consulting m'learned friends over the suggestion, however remote, that he had anything to do with the *Airplane* or *Naked Gun* films.

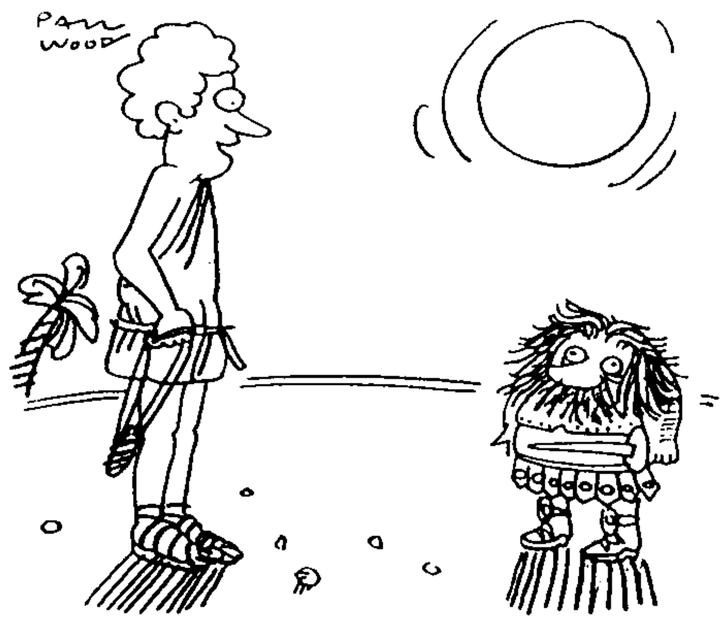
POLICE 5

POLICE Federation chiefs have been most supportive of home secretary Michael Howard's plans to put intrusive surveillance on a statutory footing.

Ignoring civil rights protesters, the federation has lined up with Howard to make bugging easier.

Meanwhile, the Superintendents' Association and the Association of Chief Police Officers are backing another new initiative: a Freemasonry register for the police service.

Curiously, the Police Federation has denounced the proposal. Its chairman Fred Broughton criticised it on the grounds that it would be an attack on, er, the civil liberties of policemen and women. "Where is this whole exercise taking us in relationship to the civil liberties and private lives of police officers?" he pleaded before the home affairs select committee.



"Well, Goliath, I must congratulate you on your PR department"

DOING THE ROUNDS

FOCUS ON LEEDS

IN CASE you missed it, 22 February was "Walk for Duncan Walker" day, for which the DW Support Group implored sympathisers to walk for justice from Killingbeck Hospital, part of the United Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust, to health department headquarters at Quarry House.

"ULTH is seeking to force the premature retirement of this highly experienced and greatly respected public servant of Yorkshire. He has served his region extremely well since his appointment in 1978; he has raised three and a half million pounds for the benefit of the hospital and was voted Yorkshireman of the Year. Until quite recently he was solely responsible for the treatment of Yorkshire children with heart defects and has made super human efforts over the last 20 years to provide a service of excellence."

All of this is undoubtedly true; so why has Stuart Ingham, the much chided and reimbursed chief executive of ULTH (*Eyes passim*), tried to force him to take an early bath "in the interests of the health service"?

Back in July 1996 Mr Walker, then 53, was forbidden from working because of alleged declining competence. Part of the evidence on which this decision was reached has reached the *Eye*, in the form of comparative mortality statistics for the four cardiac surgeons working at Killingbeck in 1993 and 1994. The statistics must be interpreted with caution: selective quoting may well be biased and it is difficult to allow for case-mix (ie the fact that some surgeons do harder operations on sicker patients and thus will have worse mortality figures than those who do the easier operations). Also, some of the deaths after surgery may be nothing to do with the competence of the surgeon. Nevertheless, the trust felt they were grounds for suspension.

According to the trust's auditors, in 1993 a Mr Saunders operated on 140 patients, 2.9 percent of whom died within 30 days. For Mr Watterson, the figures were 154 and 3.9 percent, for Mr Nair 235 and 2.6 percent and for Mr Walker 126 and 7.1 percent. In 1994, the figures were Saunders 122 and 5.7 percent; Watterson 136 and 4.4 percent; Nair 218 and 3.2 percent; and Walker 96 and 14.6 percent.

These figures are for adult surgery. Mr Walker stopped operating on children a few years ago when, according to an interview he gave to *Hospital Doctor* before his suspension, he realised he no longer had the precision and stamina for paediatric surgery. "Generally speaking, you are at your peak in your early 40s and a long way past it at 55... If society gets 20 years out of us at full tilt it has done well."

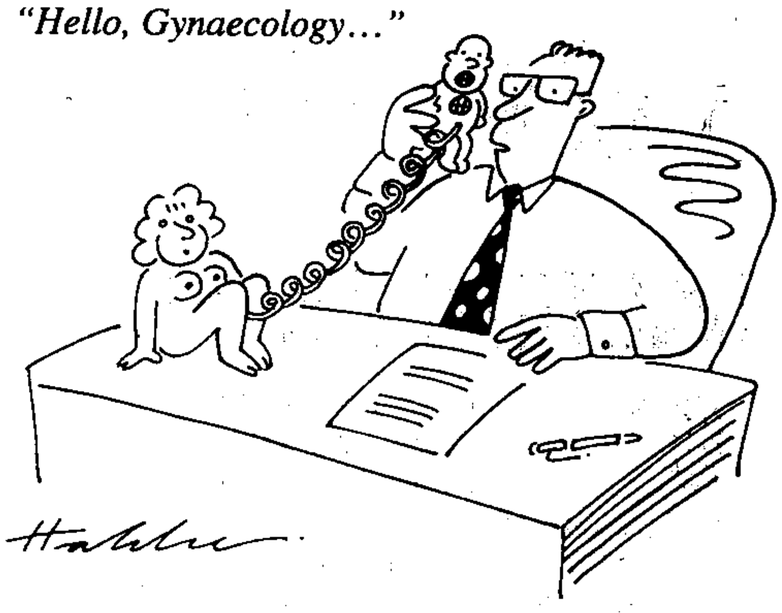
The "what shall we do with the senior surgeon who isn't as good as he was?" scenario is being played out at trusts around the country. Walker believes the 50-plus surgeon still has a role — "you cannot replace all the experience which underlies the authority with which we give opinions and guide junior doctors" — but it's an expensive one. He turned down a £300,000 pension top up and has taken his case to a special advisory committee, set up by Stephen Dorrell, as the *Eye* goes to press.

The disastrous past incompetence at **Bristol's paediatric cardiac surgery unit** (first revealed in the *Eye* in 1992) has ensured that trusts must monitor surgeons and act quickly to protect patients. But in these days of ubiquitous audit, the DoH will either have to pay for senior surgeons to switch into teaching and management as a reward for good service, or face the full acrimony of the medical establishment.

MEANWHILE, after almost four years investigating allegations of fraud and corruption at Leeds General Infirmary (*Eyes passim*)**, Lord Merlyn Rees has come up with a report in the true tradition of British fudge. The former Labour home secretary found mistakes had been made in the infirmary's chemical pathology department — but nobody was to blame.**

Older *Eye* readers will recall that biochemist Dr Chris Chapman was sacked in 1992 after he blew the whistle on a scientific fraud and made allegations of corruption against a senior colleague. Rees confirmed scientific fraud by junior biochemist Dr Stuart Evans, and concluded that department head Professor John Whicher had

"Hello, Gynaecology..."



mishandled the affair but acted in good faith. Rees cleared senior biochemist Dr Ian Barnes of corruption in his role as consultant with Belgian drugs company Medgenix. Rees did express surprise, however, that Barnes and Whicher had professed ignorance of the NHS ethical regulations governing consultancies with private suppliers.

As a consequence of Rees's fudge, all sides are using his report as vindication of their own versions of events. There is one fundamental difference between the protagonists, however. ULTH chief executive Stuart Ingham remains in his £102,000 a year post; Dr Ian Barnes has been promoted to head the LGI's chemical pathology labs; Professor John Whicher has retired with a comfortable payoff; Dr Stuart Evans retains his post at Leeds University; and LGI general manager Sue James has been elevated to chief executive at the **Barnsley District General Hospital Trust**.

The 54-year-old Dr Chapman, on the other hand, is not so comfortable. He spent over a year on the dole after his dismissal, and his current short-term research contract with **Leeds Health Authority** expires in March. Will it do the decent thing and keep him on? Or will it reinforce the message that whistleblowers are not wanted in the NHS? Protection of whistleblowers has long been promised by the Labour party. Will it deliver in government? Watch this space.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

WHILE the government gears up for another round of pointless cattle slaughter in an attempt to have the European Union export ban removed, few believe that lifting the ban will actually allow the resumption of exports. More likely, the European commission will hedge any relaxation with so many caveats that export will remain impossible.

Such is the position with the "removal" of the ban on the export of tallow, the animal fat extracted when beef carcase remains are rendered down. Much of the material is used to make soap, the export of which was banned because it contained beef tallow. But in theory the removal of the EU ban means UK manufacturers are free again to export soap made with the British product.

However, such was the ingenuity of the commission that in setting conditions for resuming exports it has proved virtually impossible to produce tallow which conforms with the rules. The sticking point is that no material used for making tallow may include the spines from cattle carcases — the vertebrae bones which can quite legally be sold on carcase meat throughout the UK and form part of any rib joint or T-bone steak.

Rendered into soap-grade tallow, this material fetches more than £300 a ton, and £20m-worth of it is held in store with more being produced each day. Now it is being burnt to provide power to render down animals destroyed in the latest selective cull, fetching some £30 a ton as an oil substitute.

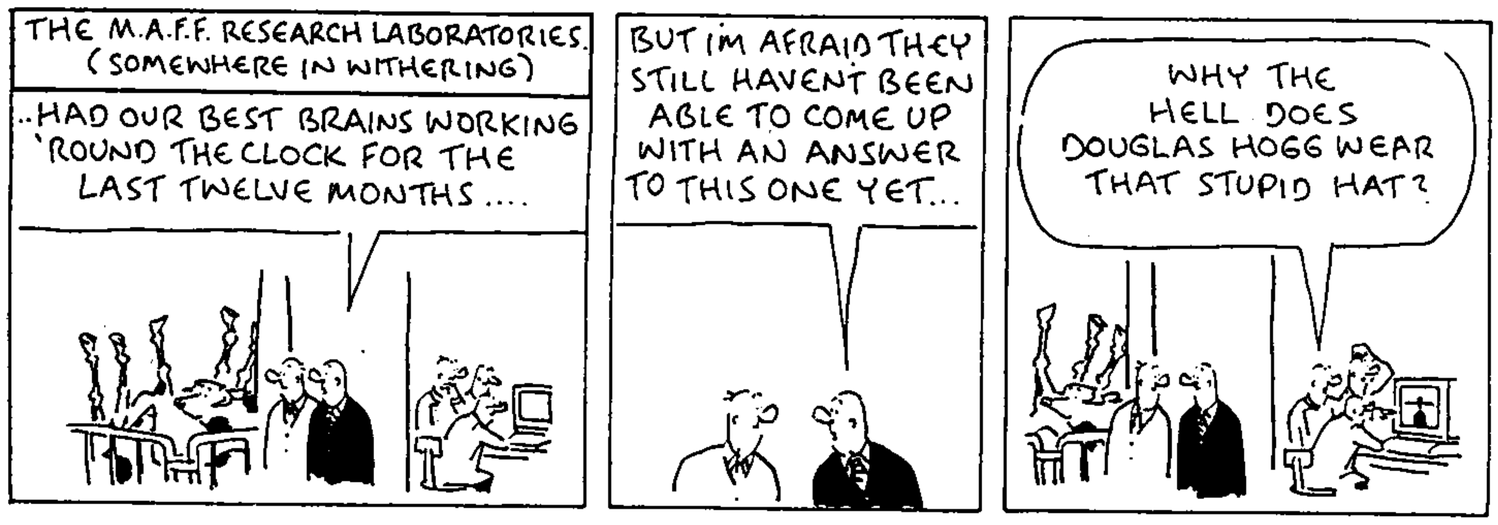
Much of the material comes from butchers' shop waste, originally part of carcases which have been inspected and stamped in accordance with EU rules as fit for human consumption. EU-financed tests have in any event proved that tallow — from whatever source — cannot pass on BSE. Despite this, the UK is prevented from using material which is perfectly safe to serve on consumer's plates: it cannot be boiled down and then processed to make soap to wash the fair skins of our European "partners". What price the lifting of an export ban on British meat?

EVEN crazier are the prices being paid to processors dealing with the growing mountain of slaughtered cattle. Dumping dead animals in the ground — euphemistically called "landfill" — is costing the government £40 a ton, while incinerating them costs £160.

Surprisingly, rendering these same carcases — the process of boiling them down to produce meat and bone meal and tallow — seems to be costing £255 a ton. The reason, it transpires, is that the government's favoured toxic waste disposal firm, Rechem, is charging £200 a ton for incinerating the meat and bone meal left over from the rendering process.

Why firms incinerating wet carcases should be paid only £160, when burning meat and bone meal with two-thirds the calorific value of coal attracts £200 is a mystery.

Old Macdonald


ALBERT
THE M.A.F.F. RESEARCH LABORATORIES. (SOMEWHERE IN WITHERING)
..HAD OUR BEST BRAINS WORKING 'ROUND THE CLOCK FOR THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS....
BUT IM AFRAID THEY STILL HAVENT BEEN ABLE TO COME UP WITH AN ANSWER TO THIS ONE YET...
WHY THE HELL DOES DOUGLAS HOGG WEAR THAT STUPID HAT?

SIGNIFICANT rises in the planting of winter cereals point to another record harvest this year. In terms of weight of wheat seed planted, wheat is up 8 percent and barley 9. The total cereal tonnage is up 5 percent. Interestingly, this coincides exactly with the current set-aside provision of 5 percent, the scheme whereby farmers are paid extortionate sums not to grow crops.

However, seed tonnage figures may underestimate the actual area under cultivation, as not all seed sales are recorded. The EU seed merchant's trade body COCEREAL, estimates wheat area has actually increased by 7.6 percent — in other words 2.6 percent more than the area devoted to set-aside. Like so many things in the EU, not least its claims to reducing regulation, it seems that less equals more.

'New Muckspreader'

THE
Rotten Borough Advertiser

Friday, 7th March 1997

ANOTHER SMEAR ON HACKNEY

"DR" Godwin Onubugo, the lab technician unveiled as a bogus doctor who carried out HIV and cervical smear tests on 500 patients in south London, was one of the chief perpetrators behind Hackney council's famous recruitment scam (*Eyes passim*).

Onubugo filled out scores of references for Nigerians who wanted jobs with the loony council. The references claimed that the job applicants had worked for the Medpath Services Housing Association and were signed "Dr Onubugo, Medpath Housing and Welfare Division".

When Hackney's housing director Bernard Crofton checked the applications he found that Medpath didn't exist and was just one of many bogus organisations being used to get dodgy people, mainly unqualified Nigerians, jobs at the town hall.

Crofton then went to Onubugo's clinic in south London to check on him and found that the quack had done a moonlit flit with £4,000 worth of medical supplies ordered from Glaxo Wellcome but not paid for.

SCOLDING SPALDING

JULIAN SPALDING, director of Glasgow's museums and art galleries, is annoying everyone in the city at the moment.

He is in dispute with trustees of the Burrell Collection as he wants to ignore Sir William Burrell's express wish and lend objects abroad. And he is also in dispute with unions as he wants to cut 55 museum jobs.

The ostensible reason for the cuts in the all-junketing city (*Eye* 918) is Glasgow's budget crisis; but Spalding also wants money to revamp the Kelvingrove Art Gallery to make it "more accessible" to ordinary people by filling it with videos and computers — anything but dull old art. Meanwhile Pollock House, a gift to the city, is closed for over half the year; the Burrell itself is threatened with closure and Hagg's Castle has been sold.

The council is committed to no staff redundancies — except among demoralised museums and art galleries staff. "In making cuts, the one thing you have to do is think about the future," says Spalding. "We have to keep our collections safe." So why is he sacking most of the experienced conservation staff? A loan exhibition of Impressionists was recently under threat as the museum could not guarantee the works would be looked after. And the council is now having second thoughts about committing £300,000 or more to fighting the Burrell trustees in the courts — and probably losing.

ARMLEY GETS A HAND

LEEDS council has finally agreed to pay for decontamination and to compensate some homeowners forced to sell their homes at rock bottom prices because of the Armley asbestos scandal (see *Eyes passim*).

Residents are keeping the champagne on ice, however, until they find out how much is on offer. Meanwhile, asbestos giant T&N, which owned the factory that covered Armley in asbestos dust for decades, has declined to reimburse either residents or the council.

Begrudgingly the city council agreed last month to accept the ombudsman's finding of "maladministration" in its handling of the scandal. Had the council acted when it first learnt of widespread contamination of homes in 1979, the panic and housing blight in Armley's "asbestos triangle" could have been avoided.

RED FACE OF THE WEEK

LEICESTER council, cutting its budget by 12 percent, will be pruning services and sacking everyone from lawyers to street cleaners. Shame it will still have to pay around £10,000 for recruitment ads in the *Guardian* and local government papers seeking new, er, lawyers and street cleaners. Dimwits in personnel thought the council was hiring, not sacking.

ROCK BOTTOMLEY

TORIES on Lib Dem-run Waverley council have been currying favour with voters by opposing plans to extend council offices at Farnham, Surrey, saying it's a £52,000 waste of money.

A large number of oldies who live nearby apparently agree, and they got together an enormous petition with 1,569 names on it. Tory councillors signed it, as did local MP Virginia Bottomley; but it arrived at the council offices *after* planning permission had been given.

The Tories then demanded that the permission be rescinded in light of the petition, but they blushed when council officers scrutinised the names. More than 400 signatures came from outside the area, some from as far away as London; and, strangely, many "objectors" had forgotten to give their addresses. One section contained a list of names in exactly the same handwriting.

The Tories were furious and claimed that a genuine petition had been deliberately rubbished. But then council officers disclosed that they had also found several duplications: among them three Tory councillors who had signed twice. Even more alarming were two identical "Virginia Bottomley" signatures. In fact the heritage secretary had simply signed on two separate occasions and had not realised she was signing the same document.

The campaigning Tories have fallen silent on their vote-winning campaign.

RUBBISH STORY

UNWELCOME plans for vast rubbish tips aren't confined to Magheramorne in Northern Ireland (see last *Eye*): Haul Waste Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of South West Water, has applied for permission for a two and a half million tonne dump near Uffculme, Devon.

Plans for the dump date from 1986 when the planning application was halted after, funnily enough, South West Water objected to possible contamination of the water supply. But that was before South West Water had bought up the landfill company!

SWW has no objection this time — apparently placated by its own firm's promised that the dump will be lined. Locals are *not* placated, though: experts from the US tell them that even the best lined dumps can leak.

Like campaigners at the Magheramorne site (which, incidentally, is owned by Haul Waste Disposal Ltd, which, incidentally, is owned by SWW), the Uffculme site campaigners fear that the toxic leachate produced by large landfills will seep into the local environment. The Uffculme dump will sit 200 feet above a river which campaigners also fear will be polluted.

Haul Waste Ltd's planning application is being examined by Devon county council who have turned down the application twice before because of pollution worries. The Environment Agency has already stated it has no objections to the dump now going ahead.

IN BRIEF

WESTMINSTER: Tories are planning to use taxpayers' money to pay legal bills for Miles Young and Alex Segal, implicated in the homes for votes scandal but not surcharged. Tory leaders say the pair, who owe £79,681.56, are innocent, but close reading of the Magill report says otherwise. On Young: "He was aware of the party electoral reasons which prompted and influenced the decision to increase the number of designated sales." On Segal: "He was aware of the aim... to devise council policies so that they are likely to increase the Conservative Party's vote..."

HARINGEY: Officers from the audit department failed to spot that two town hall accountants had siphoned off £300,000 into a shell company in a creative accountancy scam. They were rumbled by the district auditor and have been suspended pending "investigation".

RICHMOND: Trouble in the housing benefit department, where unauthorised payments have been made to B&B hotel owners, accounts have been doctored, papers relating to fraud have gone "missing" and staff face the sack if they talk to the press. The council's response? Senior managers involved have been offered golden handshakes, some of more than £100,000, and the officer who blew the whistle has been suspended.

Apology: Heather Rabbatts

THE *Eye* apologises unreservedly to Heather Rabbatts, chief executive of Lambeth council, for the allegation (*Eye*, 24 January) that Lambeth's award of a direct works contract to Serviceteam was improperly influenced by "in-depth Ugandan discussions" between Miss Rabbatts and Mushtaq Malik, the Serviceteam managing director. The truth is that there has never been any personal relationship between Miss Rabbatts and Mr Malik, and that there was no impropriety in the award of the Serviceteam contract, which in fact went to Serviceteam as the lowest tenderer.

Letters

Lunatic fringe

Sir,

I must say that I found your recent cover portraying Michael Howard as a Lunatic particularly offensive. As a loony myself I find the comparison shameful.

Yours etc,
WINSTON McCARTNEY,
Co. Down.

Baa humbug

Sir,

For a long time you have been publicising the fact that MAFF refuse to consider that illness among sheep farmers and the use of organophosphorus dips might be related.

Now the MoD has effectively admitted that gulf war syndrome is due to the use of organophosphates as insecticides.

Is it possible that the two ministries are related — in any meaningful way?

Yours faithfully,
ROGER KINGSTON,
London SW1.

Lookalike

Lord

Princess

Sir,

I wonder if any other readers have noted the startling resemblance between HRH Princess Margaret and Lord Lloyd -Webber? We know that the princess is an aspiring thespian. I wonder if she is also musical?

Acidly yours,
ENA B. TAYLOR,
London W1.

Living proof

Sir,

Your hatchet-job on LIVING MARXISM*'s coverage of Bosnia was cowardly and nauseating. Do you have any critical faculties? Do you have any evidence to counter the claims made in* LIVING MARXISM *that the "famous pictures of starving Bosnians in Serb camps" (leading to headlines such as the* DAILY MIRROR*'s Belsen 92: Horror of the New Holocaust") were a dishonest portrayal of a refugee camp set up by fleeing Bosnians?* LIVING MARXISM*'s view is corroborated by other observers, such as Paddy Ashdown (see* INDEPENDENT *13.8.92) and Professor Wladimiroff, chairman of the Netherlands Bar Association for Criminal Lawyers (see interview in* LM*, Feb 97). Does the truth matter to you? As for your assertion that the opinions of* LIVING MARXISM *"coincide exactly with those of a large section of the establishment", I am waiting with barely suppressed excitement for the day when the ruling class condemns British militarism and the colonisation of the Balkans.*

Yours,
GEORGE NAPIER,
London E11.

Behind every grate man...

Sir,

In his book ALISTAIR LITTLE'S ITALIAN KITCHEN *the said hairy chef advises us to: "Clingfilm and freeze all the parmesan rinds you can." (See page 89 under the sub-heading "Little Tip".)*

Could he and the esteemed wife of our esteemed leader possibly be related?

Yours,
D.K. DOCHERTY,
Hong Kong.

A thief writes

Sir,

I was amused to read a letter in last week's EYE *written by Peter Risdon, my co-conspirator in an insurance sting, who turned police informer in return for lenient treatment.*

Enclosed with this letter are a number of papers, including court exhibits such as police interviews, witness statements, search warrants and the like. These are public documents, readily available to anyone (not least impartial journalists) wishing to learn the truth about how I and my colleague Ben Marsh were eventually brought to trial. To sum up their contents:

Risdon was a petty, inadequate crook. Our one mistake (and I readily concede that it was a terrible one) was to have hired him as our "gunman".

Far from being an "innocent dupe" who decided to testify out of a sense of civic duty (the picture that he has been at such pains to paint ever since he sold his story to the NEWS OF THE WORLD *before our trial began), Risdon knew* ***precisely*** *what he was getting himself involved in when he agreed to become a part of our conspiracy.*

Having witnessed the success of our venture he decided one year later that he too would "have a go". However, being utterly incompetent he came up with the most asinine of plans and was caught at the first stage by the very officers who were later to investigate Ben Marsh and me.

To save his own skin Risdon informed not only on Marsh and me but on many others as well. The police had no illusions about him. However, considering him to be no threat and realising that there would be no glory in prosecuting him, they decided not only to drop the charges pending against him but to bring no charges against him in respect of his involvement in our affair in return for his testimony.

Risdon the "innocent dupe's" explanation during our trial for why it was that he had accepted payment of £15,000 plus expenses in return for tying us up in a New York hotel, firing a bullet at us and "robbing" us of £1.8m of jewels was that he had been led to believe that the whole incident concerned a mere £25,000 "book keeping exercise"! By the time of his "review" of my book in the SUNDAY EXPRESS*, however, no doubt having thought about the matter a little harder, this ludicrous line was abandoned in favour of a plaintive "Guppy had not told me he was intending to commit fraud"! Equally hilarious is his explanation that his decision to "shop" me came after "a lot of soul searching"!*

Yours faithfully,
DARIUS GUPPY,
Upper Harleston, Northants.

A rapist writes

Sir,

*Re: Triplex Lloyd plc and William Cook plc (*EYE *917): I would like to put the record straight on a number of points raised.*

I did work for Triplex Lloyd plc during 1992. My business interests were 99 percent to do with corporate mergers and acquisitions, including investigation of serious disputes between plcs and others. My connection with model agencies and models was insignificant, and never known by Triplex Lloyd plc. Confidentiality prohibits me from commenting further about Triplex Lloyd plc.

I was retained by a major client to investigate the business dealings of David Burnside, then the public affairs director of British Airways. However, Lord King was never mentioned in my brief.

I met David Burnside, at his request, on four occasions. At his flat in London, at the Stawneylands Hotel in Wilmslow, the Tickled Trout in Preston, and at Claughton near Lancaster. On three of these occasions I was aware that I was under observation and on two occasions a pocket device warned me of close electro-magnetic fields, which led me to believe that my conversations were being recorded. At each meeting Burnside asked me who my clients were, and I refused to tell him. Various vague offers of future employment on British Airways business were made, if I would cooperate and show documents to British Airways employees.

I certainly did not try to "sting" BA. I do note, however, that they paid out an awful lot of money to counter a threat that seemingly never existed. Who was kidding who?

Yours sincerely,
PETER MARTIN,
HMP Frankland, Durham.

Point of view

Sir,

Your Media News (918) refers to me as a "Serb empire loyalist". This combines ignorance and bias. Had you troubled to ascertain my views before writing — in accordance with accepted journalistic ethics — you would have discovered that over nearly 50 years' writing on (and broadcasting to) Yugoslavia, from days when I was the OBSERVER*'s specialist on that country and its Belgrade correspondent, I have held that self-determination and equal national religious rights are the sole basis for peace and stability. But I have also held that treating a religion as a nationality, as Tito did with the Moslems, to curry favour with oil-rich countries, is fraught with dangers in the Balkans, or for that matter here in Western Europe. Serbs in many parts of Bosnia — where they were a majority for centuries before being ground down by genocide, ethnic cleansing and enforced conversion — and the Krajina (the military marches) have been subject to armed aggression, including slaughter, by an imperialist coalition of Jihadist-fundamentalist Moslems, Roman Catholic Croat Clero-Fascists, Germans repeating their Drang nach Osten for the third time this century, and now American neo-imperialism, committed to the belief that God's own country has a God-given duty to impose order on lesser breeds in the rest of the world.*

Yours,
ALFRED SHERMAN,
London SW7.

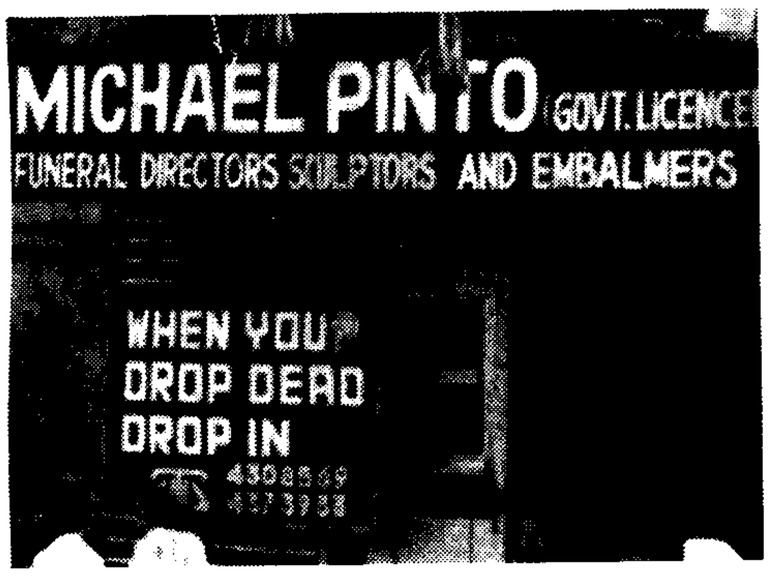
Bra humbug

Sir,

The picture of gorgeous, pouting Melinda Messenger (918) did make me wonder whether you weren't experimenting with the same artificial circulation-enhancing tactics as a certain discredited right-wing daily. However, my mate Keith, who fancies himself as a bit of a semiotician, doesn't agree at all. He claims that the world-famous 34D assets appear in an opaque referential context, being obviously bracketed inside a set of white lace quotation marks. So that's all right then.

Yours sincerely,
MANNY RAYNER,
Via e-mail.

I-SPY *Bombay*



Submitted by Martin Sands. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Public opinion

Sir,

In last week's edition (918) you printed a story which claimed that following rowdy behaviour the police were called to a public house (The Millers Well — East Ham) and I was escorted out by "Inspector Knacker" at the manager's request. These are completely false allegations. As a matter of interest, I have never been thrown out of a pub or been escorted by the police anywhere in my life.

Yours sincerely,
COUN CHRIS RACKLEY,
Newham Council.

A weekend away

Sir,

May I congratulate you for employing Stephen Hawking on your Street of Shame column. Having dragged up an incident from September 1990, when I was among a group of Fleet Street's finest (including the TELEGRAPH, MAIL *and* GUARDIAN*) to join Asil Nadir for a weekend in Turkey, you then said I left* THE INDEPENDENT *"shortly afterwards". I actually left in January 1994.*

Yours faithfully,
JASON NISSE,
Assistant Business Editor, The Times.

Abyssmal

Sir,

Whenever I read your rag I sit and wonder how it must feel to be a loyal Englishman or a loyal Briton. I take it that you sleep well and that the fact that your writings are destructive to your country weighs not a jot on your conscience. Nice for you.

I look forward to reading further destructive criticism of the country and the government after the May elections.

If all were as patriotic as you, Sir, the country would descend into the abyss and PRIVATE EYE *would go down with it.*

Yours faithfully,
Q. COAKER,
Benmore, South Africa.

Getting laid

Sir,

The reason old pictures of poultry do not show chickens hunting and killing cows and sheep in search of animal protein was that they were allowed to roam the farm where they found supplies in the form of worms, grubs and other insects.

They didn't produce many eggs, however, and before 1914 the price of eggs rose in wintertime to as much as 3s 6d a dozen — about three hours' pay, or £30 at today's wage levels.

When larger scale poultry keeping began in the 1920s and 30s breeders used white fishmeal to provide animal protein. It is still used today, together with dairy waste, and meat in countries not affected by BSE.

The point is that without animal protein, hens produce infertile eggs, so a certain amount of adjustment to the "natural" diet of breeding poultry will have to continue.

Yours sincerely,
RODNEY BANKS,
Diss, Norfolk.

Cheer leader

Sir,

Stop reviling Lord Longford for his support of Hindley. His crusade allowed the media to keep the public aware of the enormity of her crimes. Without this, some naive prat in the prisons department would have let her out long ago.

Surely such a poison chalice deserves a toast: Your very good health and a long life, my Lord!!

Yours faithfully,
ALAN McCORMICK,
Belper, Derbyshire.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"We are not as bad a team as people give us credit for!"
MARK BARHAM, BBC Radio Norfolk
(John Sewell)

"... and still we have a game on our hands. As long as it remains that way, then that's the way it will be."
ROB JONES, Radio 5 Live
(Ian Heath)

"This game's about winning and losing — and if you win, that means you've beaten someone."
GRAHAM TAYLOR, Sky
(Simon Jones)

"If England lose, they'll be the losers."
BOB WILLIS, Sky
(David R. Coe)

Shoemaker: *Sometimes we use French leather.*
John Eley: *Where do you get that from?*
Shoemaker: *France!*
BBC Radio Suffolk
(Tony Green)

HOM SAP

AUSTIN

Letter from India

by Our Own Correspondent

Sonia Gandhi

INDIA's "first family", headed by the Italian-born widow of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, is once again in the news but for the wrong reasons.

Sonia Gandhi, née Maino, from Turin, has been tainted by recent revelations in the arms payoff scandal in which Swedish armaments maker AB Bofors paid $50m to facilitate the sale of around 400 howitzers to the Indian army in the late 1980s.

The kickback scandal led to prime minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress party being voted out of office in 1989 after he lied in parliament and stymied investigations through a sham investigation committee.

But Swiss bank documents recently handed to the Central Bureau of Investigation have named Octavio Quattrocchi, an Italian and close friend of the Gandhis, and Maria, his wife, as one of five recipients of the kickbacks. The others who received payoffs will be known after another set of Swiss bank documents are handed over to India in a few weeks.

Quattrocchi, who represented an Italian multinational involved in oil prospecting and pipeline building in India for more than two decades, drummed up business worth more than $2bn in this time thanks to his links with the Gandhi household. Anticipating events, however, he fled New Delhi for Kuala Lumpur last year. The Italian company took out adverts in major Indian newspapers saying it had severed all links with Quattrocchi who no longer worked for it.

But as soon as Quattrocchi was officially named as one of the recipients of Bofors money, Gandhi's Congress party immediately denied any association between the Italian businessman and the "first family". Ironically, Quattrocchi responded the same day from Kuala Lumpur saying he was very close to the Gandhi household— but the allegations involving him in the Bofors scandal were "just a story".

Officials, however, say the Quattrocchis had easy access to the Gandhi household and through Sonia to senior government ministers in charge of allocating lucrative contracts to build oil pipelines halfway across India. Quattrocchi was also reportedly responsible for the dismissal of at least one unobliging federal minister.

Indian investigators are now negotiating with the Malaysians in an attempt to question Quattrocchi who, according to media reports and one authoritative book on the Bofors payoffs, acted as a "bagman" for the Gandhis. The telltale diaries of a senior Bofors employee at the time of the gun deal mention payoffs to a certain "Q", in addition to several others.

The choice of the Swedish howitzer, too, was controversial as its French and Austrian competitor scored over it after a series of rigorous trials and evaluations. But after a private meeting in New York between Rajiv Gandhi and Swedish premier Olaf Palme, the Bofors weapons system mysteriously became the unanimous choice of the Indian army.

The $1.3bn deal for 410 howitzers, ammunition and ancillaries was finally signed in March 1986. It was the biggest ever signed by AB Bofors — which was nationalised in the early 1990s — and it saved the company from closure, forestalling widespread unemployment. Soon after the deal Palme was shot dead and Gandhi was voted out of office. And when investigations into the payoffs began in 1987, a senior Bofors official mysteriously died after being pushed under a train at a suburban railway station in Stockholm.

More recently, General K. Sundarji, the chief of army staff who cleared the Bofors gun despite reservations over its competence, told the Central Bureau of Investigations that the kickback cover-up was done to protect one man — Rajiv Gandhi. Mrs Sonia Gandhi, however, denied all. Mother India and the Gandhi legacy are in trouble.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

● "My involvement with this case began when a 54-year-old man entered my surgery, complaining that two days earlier he had drunk a lot of whisky and 'done something very stupid' to his rectum. A preliminary rectal examination revealed a hard, smooth, globular mass. When asked specifically, the patient admitted that an electric bulb had been in his rectum for two days. He said he had gotten drunk, accepted a wager of $100 and, using shaving cream as a lubricant, inserted the 100-watt electric bulb into his rectum. The next day, sober, he realised he'd 'done a dumb thing' but thought the bulb would come out unassisted. It did not and, when he discovered he could no longer defecate, he finally sought medical help.

"Because this was a large object (maximum diameter 61 mm, total length 114 mm), made of fragile glass, special consideration had to be taken to avoid a breakage, which could result in lacerations to the rectum and adjacent structures, with consequent complications. The patient was taken to the operating room and placed in a face-down position with his hips elevated.

The buttocks were separated and held apart by a circular metal ring. With the aid of malleable retractors, the bulb was visualised but it was not possible to get a gloved finger over the maximum diameter of the bulb. Toy darts with suction cup ends were used to draw it to the sphincter, but four attempts to manoeuvre it out proved unsuccessful.

"After placing the patient in the lithotomy position, three #24 Foley catheters with 30 cc terminal balloons were lubricated with mineral oil and passed over the bulb, while maintaining a steady pull on the attached dart. Once in position, each balloon was inflated with 30 cc of water, and 30 cc of mineral oil was injected into the rectum through another Foley catheter. A steady pull of about five pounds was applied to each catheter and, after about ten minutes, the sphincter began to dilate and the bulb began to emerge. It finally passed through the external sphincter with no further complications, followed, inevitably, by a torrent of faecal matter.

"The patient apologised profusely, and left. I never discovered his name, or saw him again. I have since investigated the literature on this subject, and discovered that individuals in all societies are prone to introduce foreign bodies into the rectum, penis, or vagina, sometimes for sexual gratification, sometimes for unusual psychological reasons. Recorded items have included coke bottles, a baseball, a telephone receiver, a pickle jar, and the U-bend of a sink. However, to my knowledge, this remains the only recorded case of light bulb being removed unbroken." Vaman S. Diwan MD, MS, Huntington, West Virginia. *(Annals of Emergency Medicine. Spotter: Billy Wheeler)*

—●—

● *"Dressed in traditional costumes, boys and men of the small town of Bagolino are ending their annual carnival in the time-honoured way," a presenter for RAI Uno television told his Italian viewers, as he spoke to them live from the town square. "They run through the streets, squeezing each other's testicles, while the women remain indoors, preparing special cakes made with flour, cheese, and eggs, which they shape to resemble large testicles.*

"The villagers consider testicles to be sacred, and believe they are related to the Latin word testimoniare, meaning to bear witness. When asked to swear on something sacred, they always choose their testicles and..."

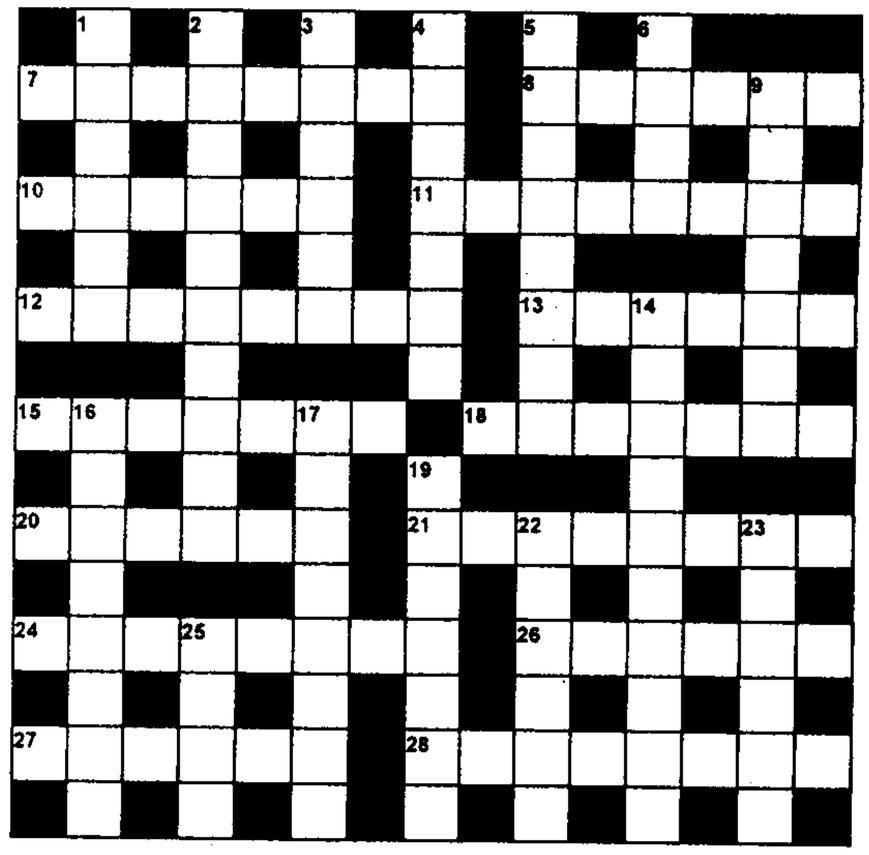
The reporter was unable to continue because, at that point, he was set upon by a crowd of men who buried their hands between his legs. (RAI Uno TV (Italy) 2 February 1997. Spotter: Liam White)

COMPILED BY

Victor Lewis-Smith

EYE CROSSWORD 74

by Cyclops *£100 prize*



ACROSS

7 It's a plant — and you're buggered! (8)
8 The old people's A to Z's crumpled etc. inside (6)
10 Yentob having chucked away capital to protect mediocre leader, put in grave situation (6)
11 Call girls casually drop Labour's leader for alternative party leader (8)
12/23 Union entitlements? (8,6)
13 Not all Mori enthusiasts point in a certain direction (6)
15 Di's cue, maybe, to take interest in hara-kiri (7)
18 Furious competition gets arsehole on speed (3,4)
20 Old-fashioned cure for a touch of hagiography sickness (6)
21 Does she go down big as a school representative? (4,4)
24 One has to bow before one Conservative inclined to be rebellious (8)
26 Party leader missing from podium due to senility (6)
27 The sticking out of one's organ gets the woman in a tizzy (6)
28 Crafty threats of an aggressively diplomatic policy (8)

DOWN

1 Carried sod all on this island (6)
2 Sex on the cards — that's British standards for you! (5,5)
3 Where you shut your eyes to police surveillance? Sucker! (6)
4 Some of our ads get a positive response when placed in Elle, amazingly! (3,4)
5 Player who had a divine touch? (8)
6 One hoping to make a fast buck? Yes and no! (4)
9/14 But you might not feel so flushed after forking out for this treatment (7, 1 0)
14 (see 9)
16 Nuts no longer able to swing freely (8)
17 *Eye* tip for Wally (8)
19 City trendy wants one to piss off (7)
22 Randy daren't get outed (6)
23 (see 12)
25 Stinking row (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 14.03.97. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 73

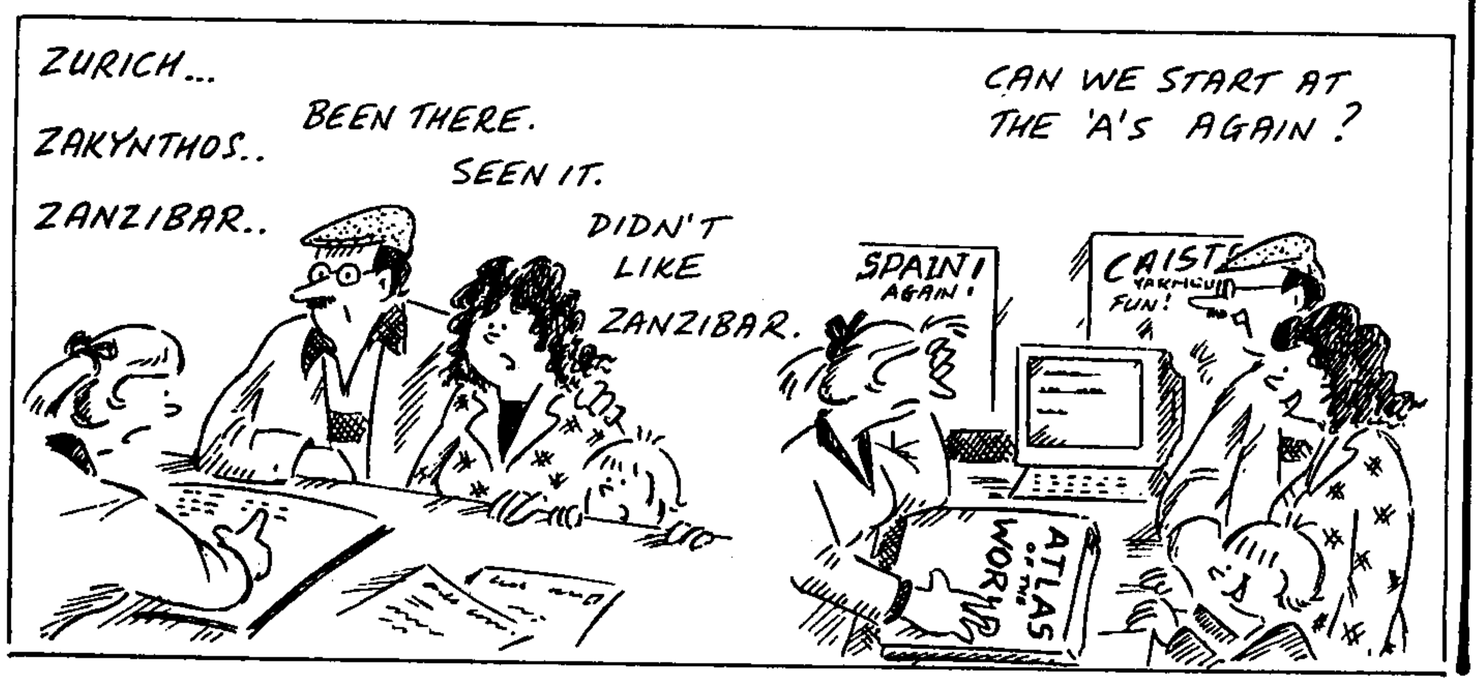
Winner: EVE JACKSON

ACROSS: 7 (see 12) 9 Birt 10 Upturn 11 Holloway 12/7/27 Press Complaints Commission 13 Tarantino 15 Line-up 16 Big end 19 Union Jack 21/5 Diane Abbott 24 The Oldie 25 Levity 26 Foot 27 (see 12).

DOWN: 1 Copper 2 Nanny 3 Anthrax 4 Asil Nadir 5 (see 21) 6 Ordained 8 Poulson 14 Sub judice 15 Luncheon 17 Exit visa 18 Screams 20 On oath 22 Nation 23 Blair.

The Lottery Winners

TURNER



TEM PORA

MONDAY, MARCH 3, 44 BC

INSIDE MELVYNUS BARGUS! X DENARII HODIE!

CAESAR PLUMPS FOR IDES POLL

by Our Political Staff **Brutus Anderson**

A RELAXED and confident Julius Major today announced that he would be going to the country on the Ides of March.

Brushing aside rumours of splits and plots, the leader said that when it came to the day everyone "would be right behind him".

Senior colleagues stressed that the party was still united and their plans for European unity were well on course. Speeches by Portillus, Heseltinus, Mark Alpinus and Cassius Dorrellius all supported their leader. "We are backing him to the hilt," they said. "Some people say that Caesar's future is on a knife-edge, but nothing could be further from the truth. As we agreed at our backstreet meeting last week: 'We have come to bury Major not to praise him'."

Shockus

Later Dorrellius issued a clarification saying that he had not intended to give the impression that he was going to stab Julius Major in the back. He had been quoted out of context and had meant to say "We come to *murder* Major because he's useless".

ON OTHER PAGES

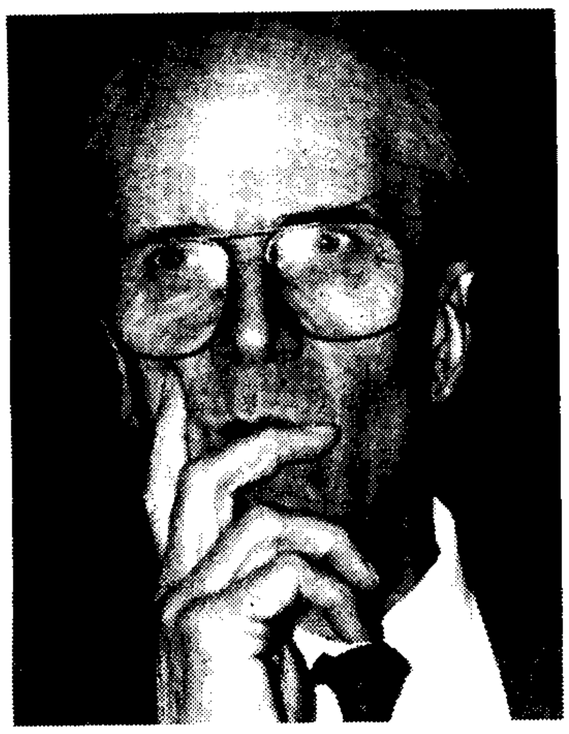
See-Through Togas — Dare you wear them? IV

Mysticus Megus warns Taureans your unlucky colour is blue V

Appian Way Protest — Swampus strikes again VIII

A Taxi Driver Writes

Every week a former Conservative Cabinet Minister who now has to drive a cab for a living is invited to comment on how terrible the present government is.



This week: **Normo Tebbs** (Cab No. 1732458)

They should never have got rid of her guv should they? Greatest mistake they ever made to my mind and look what they've ended up with? I blame that Heseltine — all he was interested in was Number One, or rather Number Ten ha ha ha ha! Get out of the way you stupid cyclist! That's the third one I've hit this morning — "Off your bike," that's what I say ha ha ha! No, that Heseltine is not fit to lick her boots. I tell you what, he should be strung up. It's the only language he understands. Heathrow was it? I could have sworn you said Gatwick... I had that Professor Hayek in the back of my cab once...

NEXT WEEK: Richard Littlejohn (Cab No. 73214), Taxi Driver of the Year, on why the Bridgewater Three should be rearrested and strung up on the grounds that it is the only language they can understand.

"This is Mr McKenzie — he's going to give a short talk on his work with the National Film Board of Canada"

Those Sensational McAlpine Diaries In Brief

For many years Lord McAlpine was at the centre of the Conservative Party and privy to their innermost secrets. Now he betrays them all just before the election. Now read on...

LORD ARCHER

HE sucked up to Margaret in the hope of getting a peerage. All he could do was raise money. What a creep!

LORD PARKINSON

HE sucked up to Margaret in the hope of getting a peerage. He was a businessman and knew nothing about politics. What a creep!

LORD HOWE

HE WAS fat, ineffective and had no grasp of politics. He sucked up to Margaret and then betrayed his party by accepting a peerage. What a creep!

LORD McALPINE

FAT, useless businessman only employed to raise money. He sucked up to Maggie and was given a peerage. What a creep! *(Shome mishtake surely? Ed.)*

JOHN MAJOR

DISGRACED himself by trying to raise money from unsavoury foreign businessmen who are known to be power-crazed right-wing lunatics. What a creep!

SIR JAMES GOLDSMITH

TERRIFIC gentleman who is so rich he would not dream of employing a fund raiser, even one as useless as myself. Surely he deserves a peerage from an ungrateful government? Not a creep. *(Cont. p.94.)*

ADVERTISEMENT

McALPINES

The Nation's Number One Demolition Expert

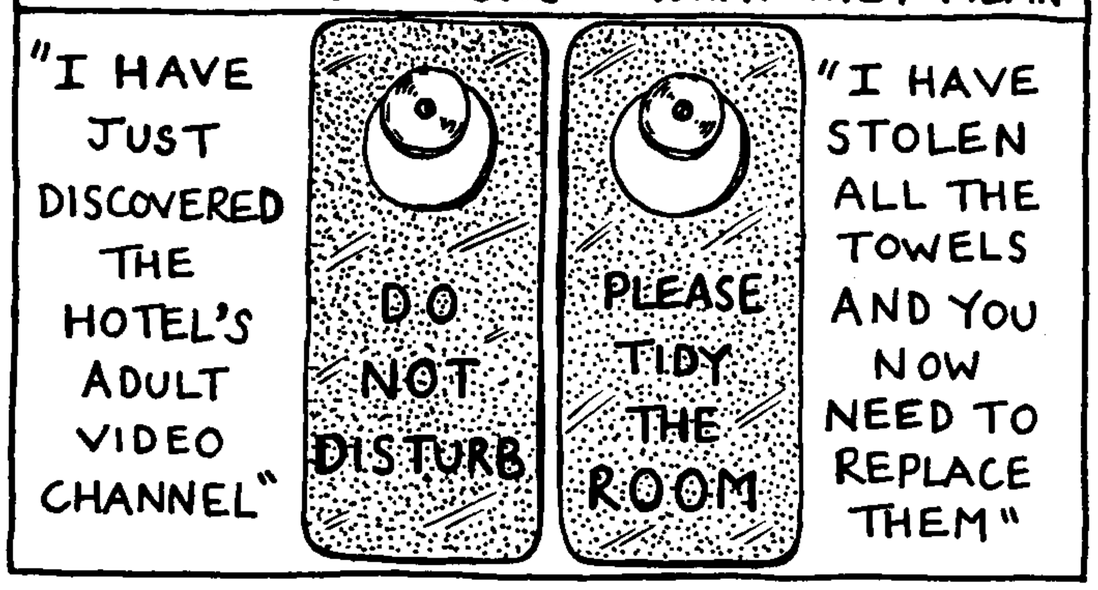
● Governments a speciality

● Just give us a ring and watch them come tumbling down

WARNING: This is a Hard Thatch area

Apparently... BY MIKE BARFIELD

HOTEL DOOR SIGNS — WHAT THEY MEAN


"I HAVE JUST DISCOVERED THE HOTEL'S ADULT VIDEO CHANNEL"
DO NOT DISTURB
PLEASE TIDY THE ROOM
"I HAVE STOLEN ALL THE TOWELS AND YOU NOW NEED TO REPLACE THEM"

TORY FOUND DEAD

by Our Political Staff **Simon Hogwash**

THE TORY Party was found dead today in a seedy, unfurnished room in Westminster. Doctors said that the Party had been "dead for several years".

Said a spokesman: "It is a tragedy. No one cared or even noticed.

"What kind of society is it that allows one of its leading political parties to end its life in such a pathetic condition."

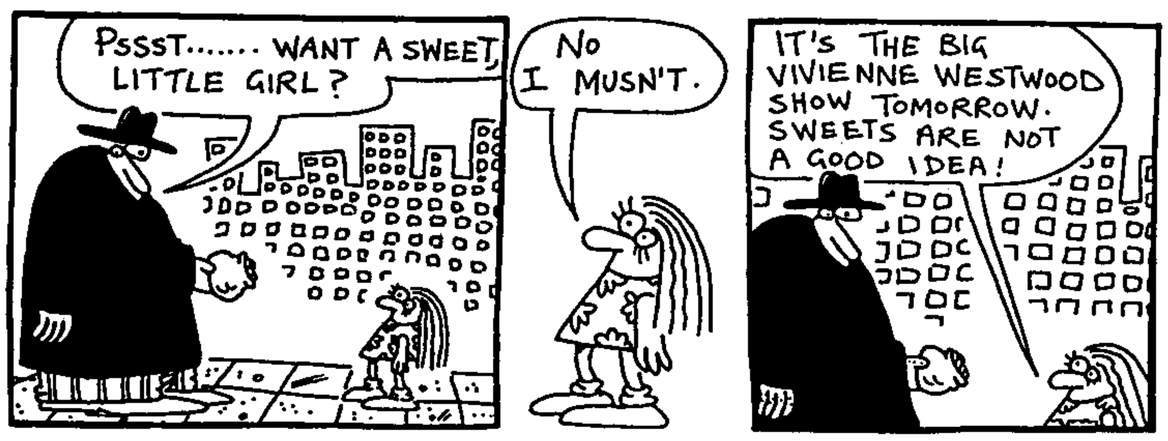
An inquest was later told that the Party had been suffering from "acute depression", brought on by a series of unfortunate sleaze scandals, involving several hundred of its MPs.

The date for the funeral has been fixed for 1st May.

DENG: A NATION MOURNS

SUPERMODELS

KERBER



From The Referendum Bunker

Bulletin No. 94

Achtung!

So, Mr Major-Bond. This week I have yet another little surprise for you. There have been so many, I know. But this one really is the secret weapon to end all secret weapons.

Do not laugh at me, Mr Major. It is not a luxury you can afford. This time I am about to hit you where it will hurt you most — right in the heart of your own constituency.

(Strokes white piece of A4 paper from Mori showing Referendum support as "Nil")

You look worried, Mr Bond. And so you should, when you hear the name of the world-famous figure whom I have chosen to destroy you in Huntingdon. Carla, show in our latest recruit.

(Enter sultry Italian grandmother in Spice Girl Union Jack micro-dress with matching red PVC boots. She is leading a shambling elderly naturalist [surely 'lunatic'? Ed.] with large beard full of baked beans)

David Bellamy *(waving arms around)*: I may not know anything about politics, but what I do know is that down here in the undergrowth all sorts of little furry creatures are crawling out from under stones, saying that they hate the EU. And for good reason, because those naughty men in Brussels are destroying all our voles and moles and all the other little creatures that live in holes...

(The hirsute environmentalist is led off by Old Etonian members of the Marmite Army in white coats to complete his adoption speech on Huntingdon FM's popular breakfast traffic and news round-up programme "Good Morning Fenland" with Sandra Amrolliwallah)

So, Mr Major-Bond. You disappoint me. You are pretending now that you have never heard of the celebrated Mr Bellamy. What foolishness! You cannot expect me to believe such a ludicrous idea. How dare you insult me with your ignorance. I tell you, the day will come when you will wake up to the headline "Bellamy Crushes Major In Shock Referendum Party Landslide Heh, Heh, Heh".

And now Mr Bond, once again I must leave you. It is time for my secret injection of Marmite, the wonder-drug which is going to sweep me to supreme power.

(Sir James Goldstandard climbs onto rocket-powered rollerblades and heads off to Putney to address mass-rally of two alsatians and a labrador wanting to know whether quarantine laws are to be abolished under the Maastricht Treaty)

Issued by The Referendum Party of Great Britain

(prop. Sir J. Goldenretriever)

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

Today I have had to put a new name *in my* Bastards book, under "H". It is not "Howard" as you may be thinking, although he is in it too, but Mr Sir Edward Heath who has told everybody to vote for Mr Blair. Mr Sir Edward thinks that the Labour Party are more committed to Europe than I am. How can he tell what my policy is on Europe, since nobody knows, not even me? Mr Dr Mawhinney says that Heath has done us a good turn, worth several million votes, since he is unpopular. "If he tells everyone to vote Labour, they'll all do the opposite," he said. "A bit like you." He is obviously very confused and must be exhausted from working so hard to win the Wirral by-election, which we will. Oh yes.

Tuesday

Mr Rifkind has been on the Today programme, which my wife Norman allowed me to listen to this morning instead of Classic FM's Top Of The *Morning* Show with Mr Henry Kelly, who is considerably more polite and pleasant to listen to than Mr Humphrys. Anyway, Mr Rifkind told Mr Humphrys that we are "hostile" to the Single Currency, which got Mr Humphrys very excited because it meant it would make the top headline on the next news programmes. And it was true. Five minutes later there was an urgent newsflash saying "We interrupt the interview with Mr Rifkind to say that a senior cabinet minister, Mr Rifkind, speaking on this programme a few moments ago, has just announced a change in Government policy by declaring his deep and abiding hatred of the Single Currency." Two minutes later Mr Clarke came on the radio to announce that Mr Rifkind had made a slip of the tongue and been quoted out of context. What he had meant to say was that we were very "hospitable" to the idea of a Single Currency. My wife Norman jumped up and turned the radio back to Mr Kelly, saying: "This is ridiculous. Now no one will know whether you are for or against the Single Currency." "That is our policy," I said, "and has been all along." Norman then ignored me and went on cutting up her pieces of cheese ready for the freezer.

Wednesday

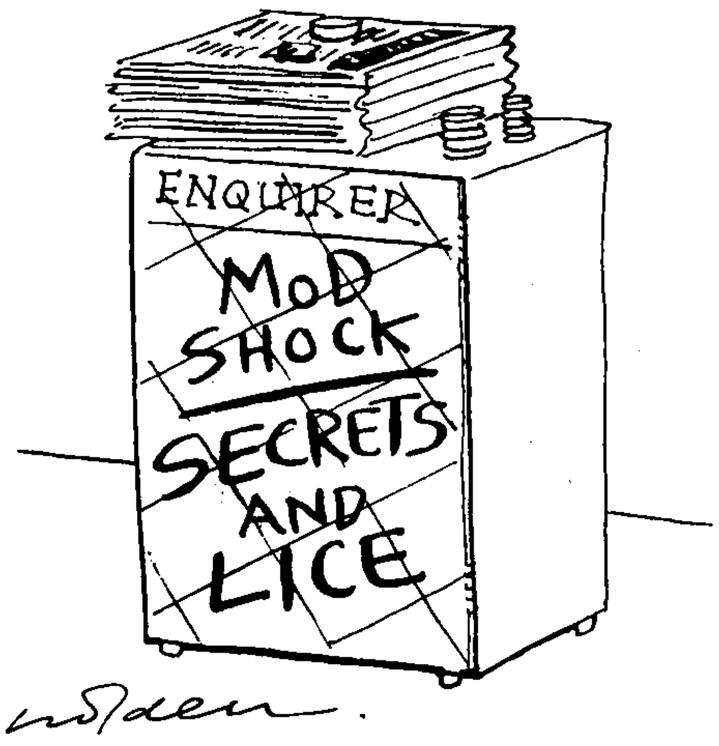
This is a historic day for Britain. Our greatest living composer, Sir Lord-Lloyd-Webber has become Lord Lloyd-Lord-Webber and has taken his seat in the House of Lloyds. He is very angry with Mr Blair for spreading rumours that he was going to leave the country if Labour wins the election. "This is totally untrue," said Mr Lord-Webber. "I am going to remain in England when Mr Blair wins." It is good to have his support.

Thursday

My friend Mr Soames, who is now in charge of the army, has said that he will not resign for telling lies to the House of Commons. He is quite right not to resign. We have long established a precedent that people who tell lies do not do so deliberately and therefore do not have to resign. Mr Waldegrave made this quite clear during the Scott report, and Mr Willetts made it clear again during the fuss about Mr Hamilton and the brown envelopes. Mr Soames explained that he only told lies because his civil servants had lied to him. He could not remember their names but he promised there would be a full enquiry to find out what their names were, and when this had been completed sometime after the election, they would be very severely told to carry on as usual.

Friday

Nothing much happened today, I am glad to say. It has not been a historic day at all. Apparently, we lost a by-election somewhere in a place called Wirral, but this is of absolutely no importance, which is why I am not even going to mention it in my diary, which I am not. Oh no. My brother Terry rang me on his mobile to ask me to guess where he was. When I said that I was very busy losing by-elections, he said: "I am at Stringfellows with Posh Spice." "I do not care what you are eating," I told him very sternly. "I have other things to worry about, like this by-election, except that I am not worried about it." "I just rang," he said, "to tell you that I have decided to leave the country and live abroad if you win the election. And that's a promise." There was a lot of giggling in the background, and I heard Terry saying: "There you are, you see, I did it, Victoria. And now you owe me a tenner."



Saturday

The papers are all saying that the defeat in the Dorell by-election has left me confused. Nothing could be further from the truth. Or from the truth. Oh yes. Oh no.

Sunday

Mr Dr Mawhinney has important news. We are taking down the Lion poster which was a great success although it failed and starting a new campaign. The idea is to admit that we are going to lose the election and this will frighten everyone into voting for us! This is brilliant. We will have a new poster saying "The Tories are going to lose" with a picture of the Titanic going down with a red tear coming out of the funnel. When people see this they will feel very sorry for us and vote Conservative. "No one likes to see a sinking ship," said Mr Dr Mawhinney as he prescribed some more white tablets for me to take.

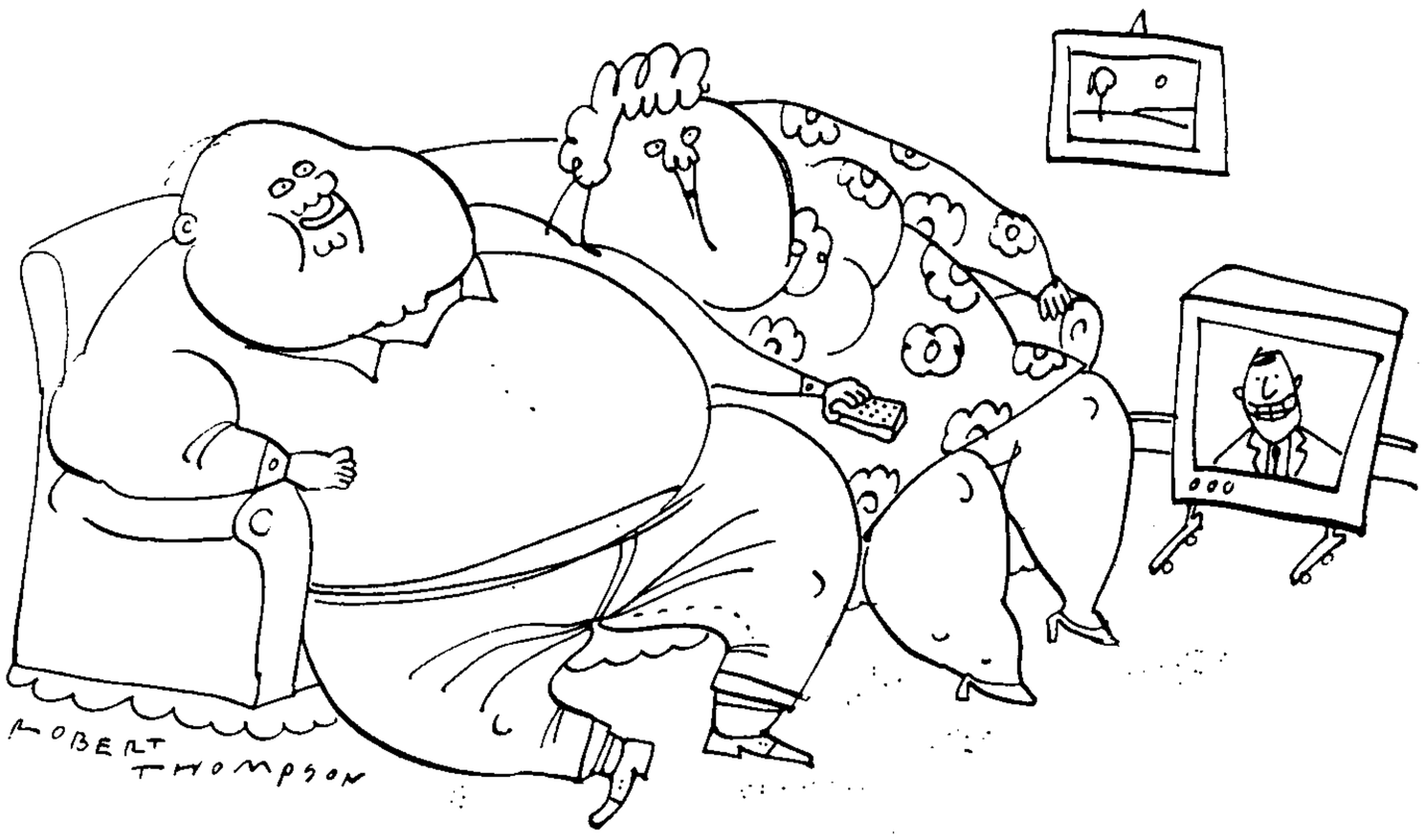
"But you are not a proper doctor," I said. "And you are not a proper Prime Minister," he replied.

Monday

Mr Stephen Wirral, who is in charge of the Health Service, said on television yesterday that we will not join the European Single Currency. He phoned this morning to explain that when he said this to Mr Dimbleby he actually meant that we would join up if the conditions were right. It was a slip of the tongue, he said, just like Mr Rifking all over again.

"You are tired and confused," I told him.

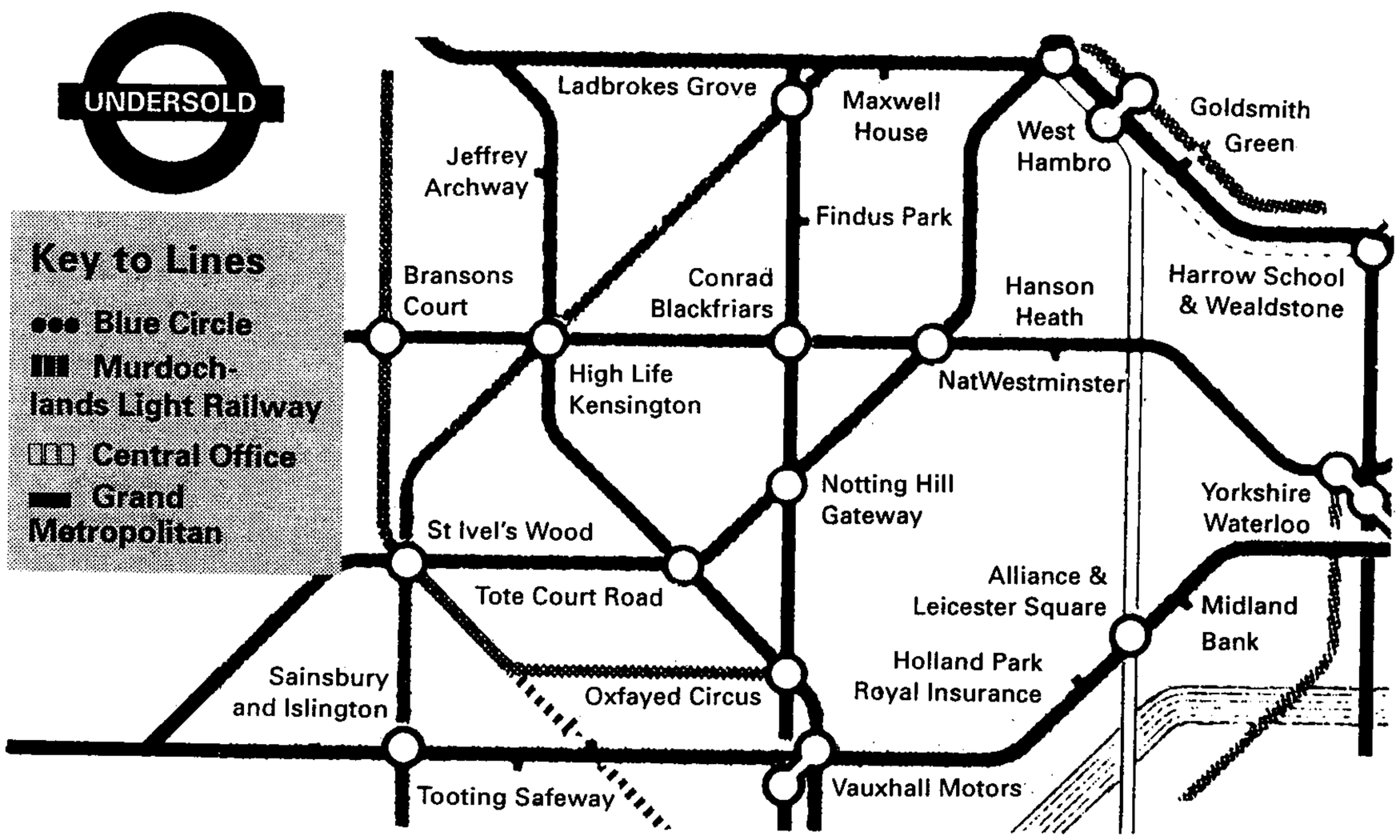
"He must be after your job," said my wife Norman, as she flicked through a brochure from a firm called "Pickfords".



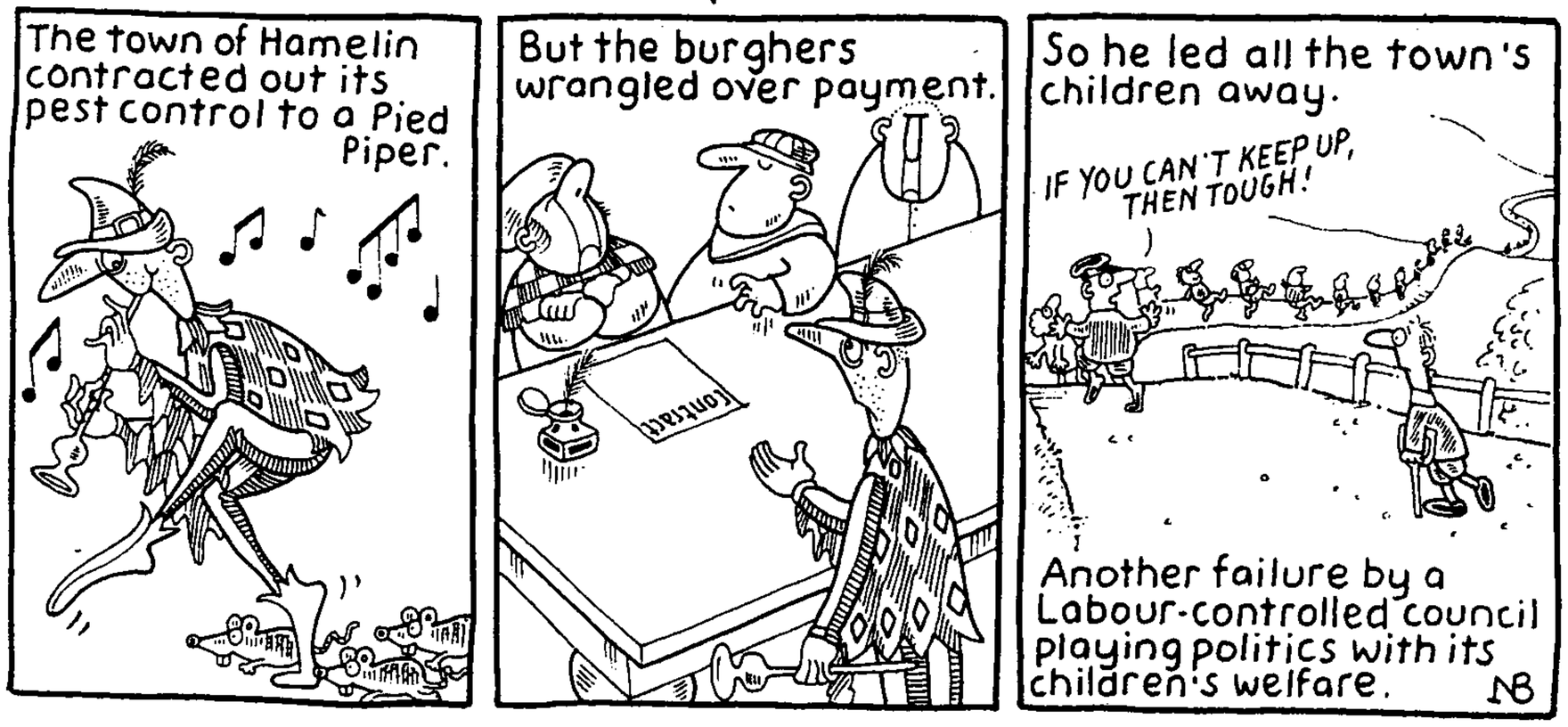
"What shall we watch — Delia, Floyd, Rick Stein, Rhodes or Ready Steady Cook?"

The Privatised Underground

Your cut-out-'n'-keep guide to the new-look Tube



TORYTIME: The Pied Piper


The town of Hamelin contracted out its pest control to a Pied Piper.
But the burghers wrangled over payment.
So he led all the town's children away.
IF YOU CAN'T KEEP UP, THEN TOUGH!
Another failure by a Labour-controlled council playing politics with its children's welfare.
NB

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Her Majesty the Queen granted an audience to Mr Stephen Mannorak, representing the firm Webs-'R-Us, in order to launch the new Royal Web site. She has graciously consented to receive ER-mail at brenda@buck-house.stuffDi.maj.uk.

HIGHGROVE

Her Queen-in-Waitingness, Lady Camilla Parker-Knowles, gave a televisual audience with Mr Chris Crass from Channel 5 as part of a series of commercials to launch a new-look Camilla — "Soft, caring, gentle, and not a horsey old baggage who has run off with the Heir to the Throne."

YABBA-DABBA-DUBAI

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales arrived here today on the Royal Yacht HMS Floating Trade Centre (formerly Britannia). A reception was held on board for His Highness to meet representatives of the local armaments community. Contracts worth £800 billion were exchanged, while the Band of the Royal Marines played a selection from *Ali Get Your Guns*.

SOUTHYORK, SUNNINGDALE

Her Non-Royal Highness Sarah the Duchess of Fergiana took up residence in the Servants' Wing with the Princesses Fifi Trixibelle and Lulu. Following an audience with His Royal Highness Prince Andrew, the following statement was issued: "Although the Duke and Duchess have agreed to cohabit for financial reasons, there will be no carnal relations between the Royal Couple unless the Duchess gets desperate." The Duchess of Fergiana will later attend the transportation of her personal effects to the Servants' Wing and she will be escorted by the staff of Budget Removals led by Mr Sid Clumsy and Mr Len Smash. Also assisting the Duchess will be Mr Smash's half-brother Doug and his mate "Spud". The procession will be as follows:

FIRST VAN

Her Ex-Royal Highness the Duchess of Freebiana; Mr Smash; Mr Clumsy; 200,000 unsold copies of "Budgie Goes Bankrupt".

SECOND VAN

Doug; Spud; the Editor of Hello! Magazine; one million unsold videos of "Budgie Goes Back To Her Husband".

1ST MAN HIDING IN WARDROBE

Mr Johnny Bryan.
(That's enough. Ed.)

THE BATTLE OF NEASDEN – FA FAIL TO ACT

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man On The Terraces With 3,000 Share Options And A Kidney Donor Card

THE WORLD of soccer was burnt to the ground last night when the long-running feud between Neasden's coloured striker Ian Fight and Dollis Hill's Scandinavian keeper Peter Schmacker erupted again at Neasden Bridge.

From the kick-off, it was clear that both men had come prepared for trouble. Fight, armed with a Kalashnikov and hand grenades, wasted no time in attempting to bring down the Dollis Hill man by letting off several rounds of high-velocity shells in the direction of the Dollis Hill net.

Shoot

To defend himself, Schmacker loaded a cruise missile into his mobile launcher and unleashed it at the oncoming Neasden striker.

Within seconds the stadium had erupted in a fireball, engulfing the fans (Sid and Doris Bonkers).

We Saw F.A.

Strangely, referee Sid Himmler took no action. Not even a yellow card was produced and the game continued following attention to the surviving players by members of the Red Cross.

The Football Association yesterday refused to comment. "We are still looking at the video," said spokesman Jeff Doolittle. "At the moment we can see very little evidence of foul play. In fact we can see very little of anything, due to the amount of smoke.

"Football," he continued, "is, after all, a contact sport and we must expect the occasional stadium to be burnt to the ground."

Ron Knee is 59.

LATE SCORE

Liquidation Cup (First Leg)

Neasden FC 0

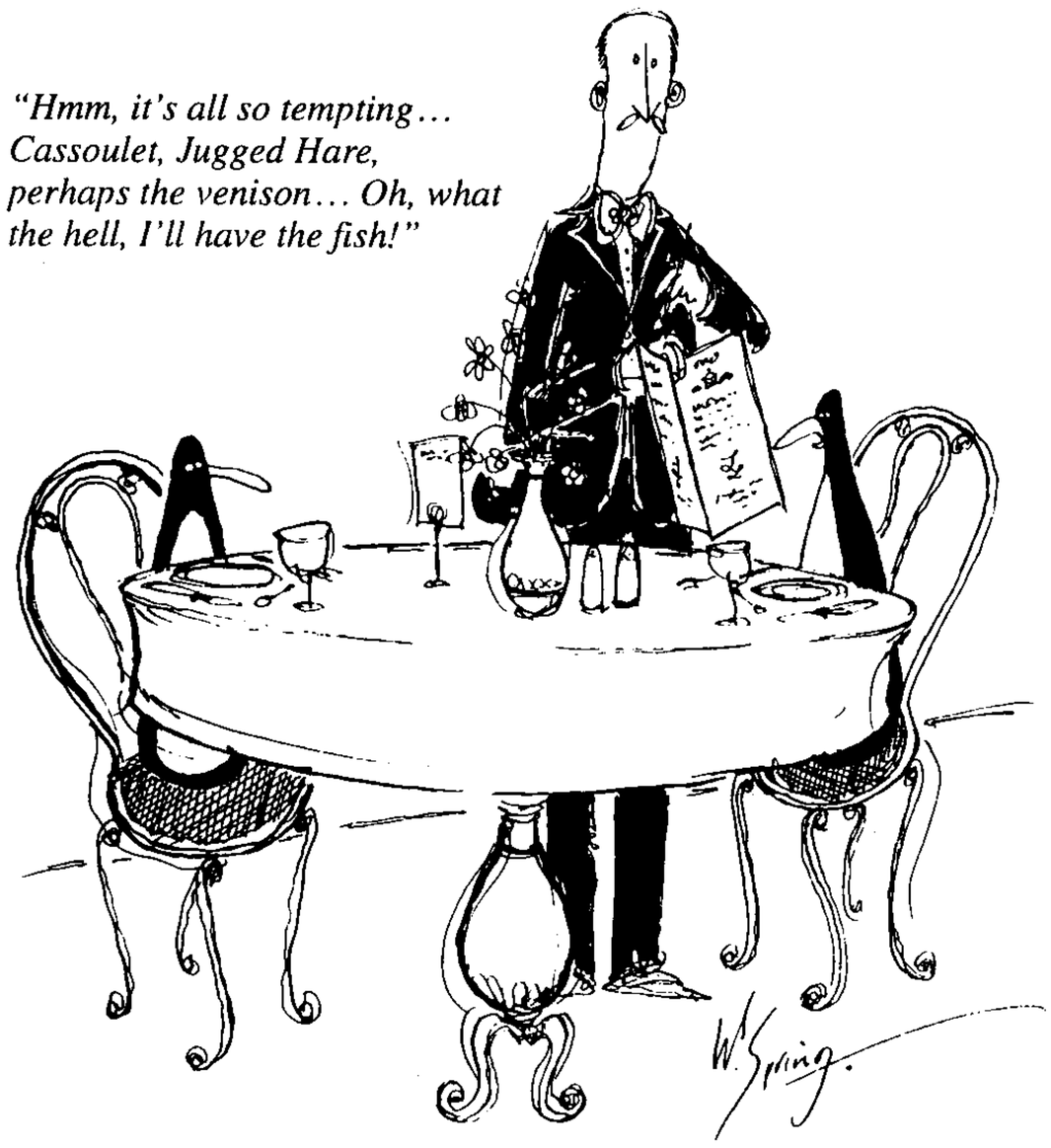
Official Receivers X1 5

(Touche, Ross, Cork, Gulley, Pevsner [o.g.])

Eastville Large double bayed des res (with 17 foot wide main bedroom) so 3 beds, lounge, dining room, kitchen and bathroom, gas central heating and part carpeted garden and fully carpeted house **£45,995**

Eastville 4 bedrooms, 2 reception rooms and large kitchen. Ideal for walking pairs of teeth as this house is two streets away form Eastville Park **£41,950**

Advertisement, Venue (Bristol & Bath)



"Hmm, it's all so tempting… Cassoulet, Jugged Hare, perhaps the venison… Oh, what the hell, I'll have the fish!"

WHAT YOU MISSED

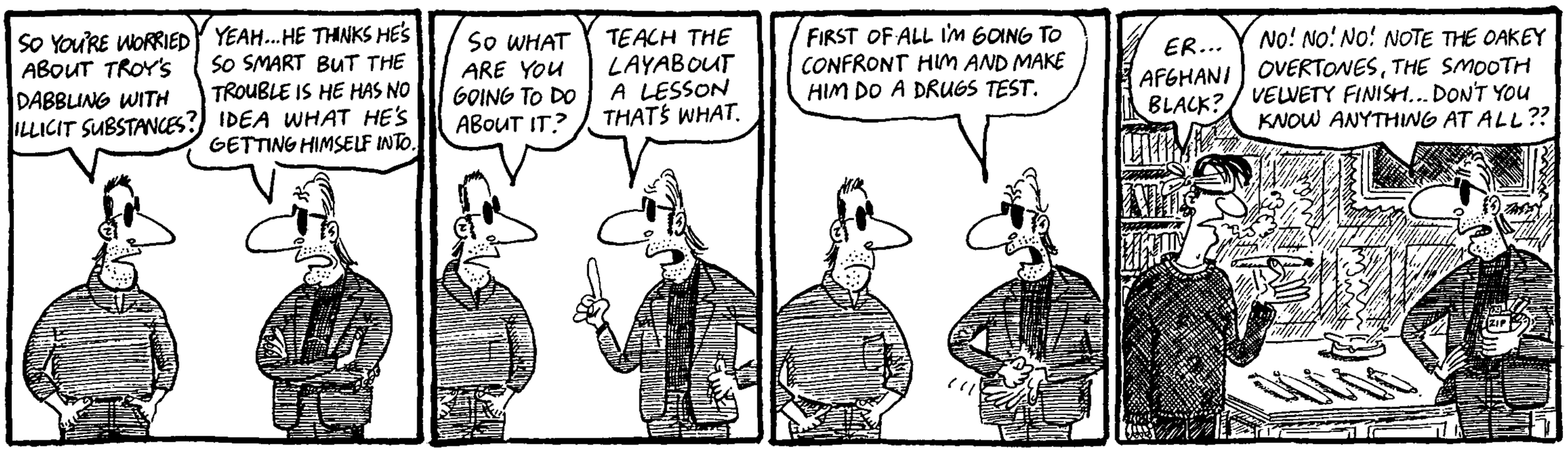
BBC Reith Lectures In Full

This year's Reith lectures are given by Dr Deirdre Z. Spartenburger, Professor of Racism Awareness Studies at the University of Malcolm X, New Dworkin.

THE underlying quandary epitomised in any multi-culturalised analysis of the implicitness of "us-ness" and "them-ness" as imposed by any dominant hierarchist paradigm on the thought-patterns of a de-socialised and therefore explicitly alienated sub-grouping, which defies universalist norms and yet, paradoxically, conforms to those very acculturalised ethic systems *(continues in this vein for several hours before telling highly improbable anecdote about her adoptive four year old son)*. "On his very first day in high school he was asked to watch a 'colour' television set. But he had been so brainwashed by the white liberal establishment to pretend that 'colour' was not important, that he burst into tears and told the teachers that he couldn't see the television because he was in a state of culturated de-racinated ethnic trauma syndrome." *(Continues anecdote for several more hours)*.

Celeb

LIGGER


SO YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT TROY'S DABBLING WITH ILLICIT SUBSTANCES?
YEAH... HE THINKS HE'S SO SMART BUT THE TROUBLE IS HE HAS NO IDEA WHAT HE'S GETTING HIMSELF INTO.
SO WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?
TEACH THE LAYABOUT A LESSON THAT'S WHAT.
FIRST OF ALL I'M GOING TO CONFRONT HIM AND MAKE HIM DO A DRUGS TEST.
ER... AFGHANI BLACK?
NO! NO! NO! NOTE THE OAKEY OVERTONES, THE SMOOTH VELVETY FINISH... DON'T YOU KNOW ANYTHING AT ALL??
ZIP

Forward With The People's Liberation Army

BEIJING TIMES

'Better Dead Than Read'

I Deng

GREAT WORLD LEADER DEAD

Tribute Flows In

THE people of Britain were in mourning today for the god-like figure they called "The Father of His People".

He was the last of the great world statesmen who emerged in the years after World War Two.

Glo-sah Heath, affectionately known as "Dung", lived through turbulent times, and fell out of favour during the Non-Cultural Revolution, when Britain was ruled by the mad dictator Mao-Tse-Thatch.

No Mourning Crowd

In his later years, Heath was best known for his unshakeable support for the Chinese leadership.

He spoke out courageously in defence of all their policies, most notably the shooting of students in Tiananmen Square, the torture and massacring of Tibetan monks and the regular sending of large cheques to himself.

On Other Pages

Why Did Heath Never Mate? *asks top Panda* **14**

Your Bicycles Tonight **18**

Unfunny Cartoon by Wok **23**

POETRY CORNER

Lines on the departure of Mr Dung, 1789-1997

So. Farewell
Then Great Leader
With the
Cheery smile.

You have ended
Your Long March
To the great
Red Sunset.

Keith's Mum says
You toyed with
Consumerism
But now you are
Dunshopping.

E.J. Thribb (94¾)

Mr Tennant, who is a director of Mid Southern and South East Water, said projects in the pipeline were causing alarm.

The Times

Stories Retold From The Bible No. 94

The Conversion of St Andrew

NOW there was a holy man at that time whose name was A.N. Wilson. And he dwelt in Oxford, where he wrote many learned books concerning the law and the prophets. And he was a devout man, known for his piety and his devotion to his tweed suit and bicycle clips. But Andrew was a poor man and his improving tracts had few sales and even fewer readers.

Then one day St Andrew went on a journey to his publisher who was called St Clair of Stevenson, another holy man. And suddenly, as he was on the road, there came to him a vision, like unto a blinding flash. And he heard a voice saying: "Andrew, Andrew, why don't you persecute me?"

And when Andrew recovered from the vision, his eyes were opened and he realised that everything he had believed all his life was a load of rubbish. And from that day forth, he preached against the Gospel of Jesus and became the richest of all the scribes.

© *Society for the Propagation of Atheist Knowledge*

PARENTS MUST BE IN BED BY 10PM SAYS NEW LABOUR

by Our Home Affairs Correspondent **Nanny State**

MR DAVID Blunkett today unveiled his 10-Point Plan for Better Parenting, *to be made compulsory* within five minutes of his New Labour government storming to power.

1. All children must be given half an hour's reading aloud of traditional fairy tales and nursery rhymes every night.
2. All children must be in bed no later than 7.30pm, having brushed their teeth, put their toys away tidily, folded their clothes neatly, said their prayers, gone to the toilet and written a thank-you letter to granny for her postal order not less than one side of A4 in length with no spelling mistakes.
3. Children are not permitted to watch more than half-an-hour's television a day and then only in the following categories: wild life films, animated versions of Old Testament or classical stories, Dad's Army or repeats of the Muppet Show.
4. Children must not be naughty at any time, otherwise the terrible Mr Prescott will come round and spank them on their bottoms but only in a caring manner.
5. Er...
6. That's it.

Traditional Nursery Rhymes No. 94

Baa Baa clone sheep
Have you any wool?
Yes sir
Yes sir
Yes sir
Yes sir
Yes sir
(continued page 94)

MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomasina Stuttaford

Changing sex

NOWADAYS many doctors feel the need to dress up in women's clothing and change their names. Overnight they will turn from say James Le Fanu to Jemima Le Fanu or Theodore Dalrymple to Theodora Galrymple. There is nothing odd in such behaviour and it does not affect their abilities as doctors to pad out pages of newspapers with articles about anything that is in the headlines. If you are concerned about your doctor changing sex you should try it yourself — perhaps starting with a little cocktail frock or your wife's *(continued p.94)*

Harry Enfield's **Class Bores** Drawn by **Michael Heath** **8. Political Correctness**

"This political correctness business is absolutely insufferable I mean these days you have to watch everything you say it's worse than living under Stalin in the 30s it really is I mean even our village Christmas panto isn't safe last year I wrote a rather fun up-to-date version of Dick Whittington and on his travels Dick meets Nelson Mandela which involved me blacking up and singing but the PC Police were in on the first night and started booing! in Plumpton-Under-Lyme village hall! and of course Political Correctness has *ruined* Church, Daphne Millington has a friend of a friend whose son was turned down for ordination because he *wasn't* a queer! and 'The Archers' is full of lesbians I stopped listening to it years ago have you seen the telly recently? What a load of Marxist rubbish I wrote a letter to them with a few ideas of my own but the comrades at the BBC sent it back with a firm 'Niet!' — for BBC read KGB! I mean this PC business is totally out of hand it's worse than living in North Korea but where can one go? You can't even emigrate to South Africa anymore Jimmy Goldsmith's a good chap..."

"We've had complaints that you're using your home for some kind of business, Mr Turner"

TORIES ENNOBLE LORD WEBBER

YES! IT'S THE SPACE GIRLS!

by Our Home Affairs Correspondent **Phil Spice**

NOW it's official! The fabulous five-member all-girl group have taken the world of newspapers by storm.

This week they were voted The Best Way To Fill Space by all of Britain's top editors!

Said Charles Moore, editor of the Daily Mel-B-graph: "The Space Girls are the best thing that has ever happened to us. They are going to be really huge — about ten column inches on every page!"

He continued: "I predict they will be top of the news agenda for a long time to come."

The girls' undemanding brand of Britpap has meant that every editor has a copy of the latest Space Girls press release on his desk.

And the Space Girls, known in the newspaper business as Large Space, Huge Space, Vast Space, Op-Ed Space and Front Page Space, have proved they have a unique talent.

"When it comes to showing their knickers, these girls are world beaters", said Peter Stoddart of the unpop fanzine the Times.

Melinda Messenger is yesterday's news.

Who are they — the front-runners for China's Top Hot Seat?

1 Hu Hee, 78, currently First Secretary of the Party Praesidium and adopted heir of the late Hu Yu. At 84, he is considered to be a reformist moderate who believes in maintaining the Party's absolute control over all aspects of Chinese life. His son No Wun is head of the China-Hong Kong Venture Socialist Banking Co.

2 Hang Em Hi, 92, currently Chairman of the People's Forum For A New China. At 96, Hang is a moderate reformist who believes in suppressing all forms of dissent. His son Gih Me Sum runs the China-Hong Kong People's Finance and Car Rental Corporation.

3 Sen Din Tank, 104, currently head of the People's Liberation Army Gulag Division. At 108, Sen is seen as a conservative with hard-line moderate tendencies, who believes that nearly everyone in the country should be arrested to ensure stability. His Son Chee Poh runs the fashionable People's Lucky Dragon Disco and Karaoke Bar in downtown Shanghai.

4 Lon Gon, 128, currently dead though still revered as a veteran of the Long March. Lon, 178, believed strongly in the values of Marxist-Leninist-Maoism and the Four Great Principles, namely Arrest Them, Torture Them, Shoot Them and Keep All The Money. His son died in mysterious circumstances during the Cultural Revolution after describing Mao Tse-Tung as only "the greatest man who ever lived".

5 Sweet and Sour Pork Balls with Crispy Noddles and Special Fried Rice for Two. *(That's enough front-runners. Ed.)*

TV Tonight

A Touch of Frost

9.00am

BRITAIN'S top investigator fails to get to the heart of anything with his soft line in questioning. This week Sir David hauls a top Tory politician in for a grilling and then lets him off. Who is the guilty party? You'll never find out once Frost is on the case.

■ **Rating:** ***Super***

Ugandan work earns an award for Hilda

Farnham Herald

Literary Review

What Kate Did Next...

Human Croquet
Kate Atkinson
(Doubleday £15.99)

KATE ATKINSON? Copies of Kate Atkinson's first novel, *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*, can be glimpsed a dozen times a day on the London Underground, propped up on the laps of intent commuters — one of those rare books that every so often catch the public imagination, flourish through word-of-mouth buzz and sell a hundred thousand copies before the newspaper pundits have even begun to acknowledge their existence.

Early last year little jets of anxiety could be seen rising above the snootier end of literary London when it became clear that *Scenes*, having won the Whitbread first novel award, was in danger of routing no less a master than Salman Rushdie in the fight for the overall prize. Happily the judges ignored this gush of bookperson's snobbery, and the people's choice romped home.

Ah, the paradoxes of the modern literary life! On the one hand serious novelists like Salman, Mart and Ish locked in their impenetrable cocoons; on the other, what is known to the nation's booksellers as "the popular novel". One doesn't want to be anti-democratic or anything, still less to lecture the public on the deficiencies of the public taste, but have you read a popular novel (Joanna, Jilly etc) recently and marvelled at the sheer idleness that infects these accounts of adultery in Sussex, Benidorm, LA and elsewhere?

The bright boys may not be able to write about the right things, but the mass market brigade can't even write. In this atmosphere, anything that combines popular appeal with even the faintest hint of a style ought to be quids in.

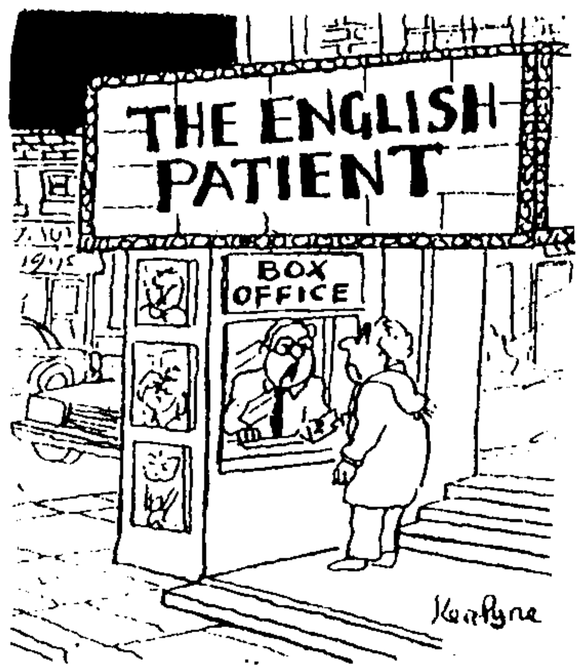
Appropriately enough, *Human Croquet* occupies a fair-sized acreage of that extremely debatable territory where the Aga saga stops and the lower slopes of the literary novel rise perilously in the distance. Like most of these things it's about a family — in this case the depressed remnant of a once lustrous tribe of landowners.

The Fairfax clan takes in larksome 16-year-old Isobel, gnomic brother Charles, mad Aunt Vinny, sad paterfamilias Gordon and his lumpen second wife Debbie. To the general haphazard quality of life at "Arden" (a name of some symbolic significance) on the mock-tudor post-war estate — the novel is set in 1960 — can be added the flagrant scent of mystery, specifically the disappearance of Charles and Isobel's glamorous mother some years back, and Gordon's seven-year absence in New Zealand.

Whereupon an air of maximal kookiness supervenes. Time slips back and forth, now to the Elizabethan age, then to 1918. Babies appear on doorsteps. Battered Mrs Baxter from next door runs a carving knife through her irascible husband. Malcolm Lovat, the unyielding object of Isobel's affections, dies in a car crash. The reader's patience, sorely tested while all this is going on, very nearly snaps altogether when the whole lurid extravaganza is explained away as a series of delusions undergone by a hospitalised Isobel after a tree falls on her head.

And then of course there are the jokes. Ms Atkinson's forte, it turns out, is the kind of goofy inconsequentiality that an extremely tolerant onlooker might just take as humour. Here are three examples from a single 500-word stretch of prose. In the first Isobel and Malcolm are visiting the latter's cancer-shrivelled mother in hospital: "My stomach is rumbling embarrassingly loudly but there's nothing to eat, unless you count Mrs Lovat herself, of course." Subsequently, Isobel reflects that "your mother only dies once after all (unless you were unlucky and she took it into her head to defy the laws of physics)". A bit later Isobel muses on a local beauty spot called Lovers Leap, "a hill from which no Lover has ever Leapt, certainly not in living memory. In the memory of the dead it may be different, of course."

Whimsical stuff, eh? What with the blood and baby fixations, the Shakespearean add-ons and the investigation of bygone family trauma, the whole thing is uncomfortably close to Angela Carter for middlebrows, and any self-respecting editor would have lopped about a third of it away. All the same, the spectacle



"There's a two year waiting list"

of real English people walking about in a more or less recognisable world is always welcome in this decadent age. In this respect, if not perhaps in many others, Ms Atkinson wins out hands down over the likes of Salman, Mart and Ish.

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

LOWLIFE SPECIAL

LONDON's literary and media flotsam will doubtless rejoice at the news that Paul "Raging Bull" Pickering, minor comic novelist and freelance hack, has been banned from the Groucho Club for life.

Many will consider the ban overdue given his appalling track record of violence brought on by excessive alcohol consumption.

This included such incidents as beating up his former mistress Mary Flanagan, an incident which resulted in Inspector Knacker being called to her home twice in one evening; unprovokedly breaking the nose of TV producer Anwar Bati at a party at the Polish Hearth Club; holding a broken bottle of Jack Daniel's to the throat of Chatto & Windus editor Jonathan Burnham; headbutting Andy McKillop, his then paperback editor at Collins; throwing a glass of wine (vessel and contents) at *Time Out* literary hackette Maria Lexton; and throwing a glass and wine bottle at film producer Susan Morrall before attempting to headbutt her.

At the Groucho Club alone, his conduct has been outrageous. At Philip Kerr's stag party in April 1991 Pickering had to be ejected from the club after headbutting several fellow diners including best man John Walsh, who performed his duties the next day sporting a livid, enpurpled eye. In December 1992 he was again thrown out after an ugly dispute over his bill which culminated in his biting a waiter on the shoulder. For reasons that remain unfathomable, the Groucho management generously allowed him to continue as a member.

This time his outburst occurred after the annual Oldie of the Year Awards lunch at Simpson's-in-the-Strand, where Pickering had behaved normally (that is to say, uncharacteristically). He had been drinking since a little after midday and by the evening, having repaired to the Groucho, his eyes were beginning to take on that glazed and manic look so familiar to his publishers and other acquaintances. Suddenly he glassed a barman who had just started in the job and required several stitches.

Then, having been escorted to the foyer while the police were called, Pickering was slumped over the reception counter in a state of repose when two unsuspecting visitors walked in. As they stood alongside his slumped form, Pickering rose up like a dinosaur emerging from the swamp and lashed out at one of them. For the next five minutes or so, until Inspector Knacker arrived, the novelist was held in a bear hug by one of the club's braver barmen.

Pickering has avoided a prosecution for assault but appears to have suffered a serious injury to one eye.

for People with Learing Difficulties:-
Camberwell Citizens Advocacy Office
Southwark Social Services

□ **MACMILLAN's launch of the *Autobiography of a Murderer* coincided nicely with the BBC making a programme about its author, Hugh Collins.**

Collins was jailed 20 years ago for stabbing a man, William Mooney, in a Glasgow bar. He was released in 1993 and is now an artist and sculptor.

The relatives of William Mooney are now engaged in a legal battle to stop Collins cashing in on the murder. As Collins himself put it to a reporter in Scotland: "I want to cash in on my notoriety and become a millionaire."

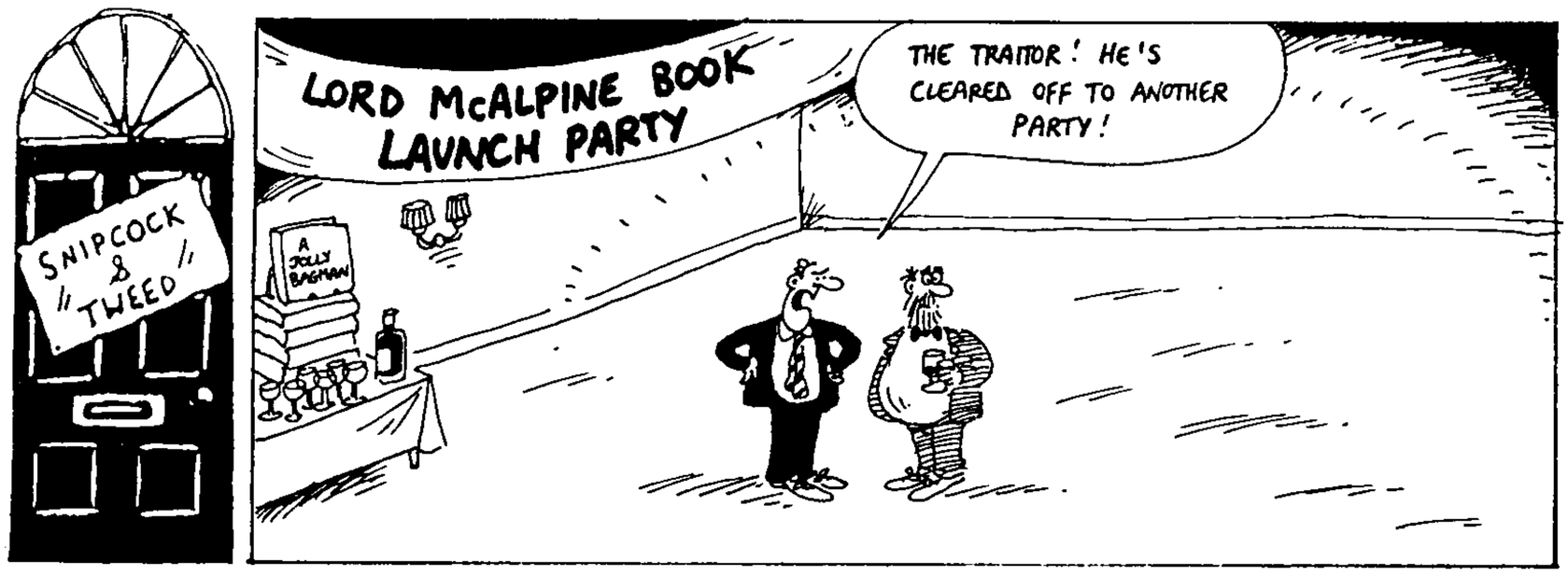
Macmillan sees it differently. A spokeswoman told the *Scottish Sunday Mail*: "There is no reason why Mr Collins should contact the victim's families... He's not trying to make money from his crimes."

■ AS Jeanette Winterson's novels have become less and less readable, she has at least been able to count on the loyalty of disciples to keep them selling. Now even these blind followers are losing faith.

Her latest, *Gut Symmetries*, has made no show on the *Sunday Times* bestseller list since appearing at number seven for just one week — during which, according to the *ST*, it sold 1,018 copies.

Frances Coady's trendy, new-look Granta paid at least £150,000 to publish *Gut Symmetries*, and is fortunate that Rea Haderman, the American tycoon who has bankrolled the company, is likely to take a more forbearing view than would most owners of the losses incurred by its star author.

'Bookworm'



footnotes

THE BRIDGEWATER CASE

IT'S A FAIR COP!

THE verdicts against the Bridgewater Four could and should have been reversed 16 years ago if a police report discrediting a vital witness had been disclosed.

A former senior police officer who helped write the report has been contacted by the *Eye* and has replied with a sensational letter expressing his "nagging doubts" about the case over the last 16 years.

The witness was Helen Johnston, a barmaid at the Dog and Partridge pub in Selly Oak, Birmingham. She gave vital evidence at the trial against two of the four — James Robinson and Pat Molloy. She said that soon after the murder she overheard a conversation between the men in which they had discussed the murdered newspaper boy Carl Bridgewater.

She reported Molloy saying to Robinson: "If we are ever caught and seen by the police you must say that the gun went off accidentally... Whatever you do, whatever you say, keep your word, the gun went off accidentally."

Mrs Johnston said in the witness box at the trial that she heard this "plain as anything" and stuck to it firmly, even though the conversation was denied by both men. Her evidence was pivotal: why should the men have had this conversation unless they had taken part in the murder?

Soon after the four men were convicted in November 1979, Ann Whelan (mother of Michael Hickey, who was also convicted of the murder) went to see Helen Johnston and begged her to think again about the incriminating conversation. Two and a half weeks later Mrs Johnston rang Ann Whelan and asked for a meeting. The barmaid agreed that on reflection she may have got the conversation wrong — and that the two men may have been talking about another job with a gun. Indeed, she wasn't at all sure that there had been any mention of a gun. A month later, Helen Johnston phoned Ann Whelan again and said she would make a formal statement retracting her evidence.

This she did, verbally and in a taped interview, to Tony Fryer, then Jimmy Robinson's solicitor. She told Fryer that the men may have been discussing the newspaper boy in general — "they didn't mean they had anything to do with it... I picked it up all wrong." Over the next few days Fryer drew up a written statement from the tape. Before she could sign it, Mrs Johnston was interviewed by two officers from Staffordshire police. After the interview, she suddenly decided that what she had said in court was true and her statement to Fryer was not.

There the matter rested until October 1980 when Mrs Johnston appeared in the first item on *News At Ten* insisting that her evidence at the trial had been wrong, that she had misled the trial. Staffordshire police promptly called in two officers from an outside force, Cheshire, and asked for a report on the Helen Johnston episode.

The two Cheshire officers were Det Supt John Morgan and Det Inspector Fred Marsh. They interviewed Tony Fryer, Ann Whelan and Helen Johnston on 5 November 1980. Ann Whelan remembers today that one of the officers was sympathetic to her campaign to discover the truth about her son's conviction. As with all secret police inquiries, the Morgan-Marsh report was never disclosed. It went to the then director of public prosecutions (DPP). A Cheshire police spokeswoman told the *Eye*: "We believe a copy went to the home office."

Until very recently, Ann Whelan and her supporters assumed that the report was hostile to her case. In any event, for the next 16 years all the authorities — police, prosecution and judiciary — continued to condemn her investigations as outrageous and to accuse her of "interfering" with witnesses. The DPP issued a memorandum declaring that Ann Whelan had "no legitimate reason" to interview prosecution witnesses without representatives of the prosecution being present, and accusing her of harassment and threats.

When the convicted men first sought leave to appeal in December 1981, they tried to call Helen Johnston as a witness. She was "too ill" to attend. In her absence the lord chief justice, Lord Lane, launched a furious attack on Ann Whelan and Tony Fryer. When Fryer explained that he had interviewed Johnston "in the interests of my client", Lane, who was presiding over one of the greatest injustices of his time, barked back: "What about the interests of justice?" Fryer was reported to the Law Society who reprimanded him — a serious punishment which meant that every time he reapplied for his certificate to practise, he had to prove he was behaving himself.

Lord Lane could find no fault with Helen Johnston's evidence. Seven years later, the case was referred to the court of appeal. Once again Mrs Johnston's evidence was challenged by the appellants. Once again she did not appear. And once again the judges (Russell, Leonard and Potts) came down

4/6/93
footnotes
ONE ANGRY MAN
THE FOREMAN of the jury which convicted four men of the killing of newspaper boy Carl Bridgewater in 1979 has told the home secretary he believes
farm, so Molloy's uncontested confession was decisive. As the juryman now admits, it was impossible to read the confession and acquit the men.
After the trial Molloy went on
Pat Molloy
STRONG ARM OF THE LAW
AS YOU WILL remem
met you at
18/6/93
FOLLOWING recent publicity about the case of the 1978 murder of Carl Bridgewater, Michael Chamberlain, 45, came to Private Eye and made this statement. He did not ask for or receive any payment, but the Eye did pay his train fare.
CARL
in the police or in the criminal fraternity. I got on well with him. He was a devoted family man, very
hard to prove it. John Perkins was called in, and the men confessed. There's no doubt in my mind that they confessed because of John's tough interrogation, which ended
mind – I can
ber which put
John said he
to interview
because he
"weak link" i
The inte
Molloy at
went on for
those days.
in a pub.
John predi
today." He
lutely clea
had bee
Molloy – I think the
used was "a couple
I assumed that
the same tough tre
suspects for violer
from John Perkin
This did not
time because I th
being done.
When Molloy
were convicted i
of the part Jol
FREE MICHAEL HICKEY
THE CRUEL vendetta waged by Home Secretary Michael Howard against Michael Hickey, who was wrongly jailed in 1979 for the murder of newspaper boy Carl
water, has degenerated
eckless breach of the
f law which Howard
he stands for.
el Hickey, who was 16 at
of the murder, was "de-
Her Majesty's Pleasure."
, Mr Justice Drake, who
his retirement this week,
e Home Secretary with a
recommended sentence
ars. The European Com-
Human Rights insists
rs can only be kept in-
eir tariff if they are a
public.
tember 1993, when
een inside for fifteen
ers
eleas
argued that M
ue released because he was not held in prison — but in a secure mental hospital. Michael's lawyers agreed that his mental health should
footnotes
THE BRIDGEWATER CASE
The Good Shepherd
TWO POWERFUL documents about the Carl Bridgewater murder
landed on the desk of home secretary Michael Howard
still further the base of the prosecution case
he Irish carpenter, the la
nt is a long letter fr
gists, Dr Eric Shan
forces
taken part in the robbery, and
he has no animosity about the
being beaten out of him. Bu
letter tells us how Perkins tr
his suspects.
"The interview was rough
to say the least," says Mr Ste
my clothes had been remo
forensic tests and I was
only a pair of women's trou
a large yellow blouse. Per
standing on my bare feet
ing me in a grip of iron w
thumped from behind.
this treatment for a shor
produced the desired r
11/2/94
THE BRIDGEWATER CASE
The Barefoot Confessor
MORE EVIDENCE has gone to the home office about the violent habits of John P
office argued that there were eight years between the alleged fabrication of Molloy's confession and Perkins's fabrication in 1987. It con
me secretary does
at Perkins's miscon-
uch later date pro-
eason to
25/2/94
THE BRIDGEWATER CASE
A Millar fails
MR WILLIAM MILLAR, of the C3 "injustices" division of the home office, has been writing long but not entirely accurr
ters justifying the convictions in th
Bridgewater murder case.
Of the crucial confession of Pat Moll
Millar wrote (on 5 January): "He (Molloy made admissions to several prison officers gave evidence at the trial."
Three prison officers gave evidence a
trial about conversations with Molloy. Non
them made notes of their conversation.
Two officers were from Shrewsbury pris
Francis Edwards said Molloy had told him: "I
lowed myself to become involved... I am not m
ing any excuse. I know he had a gun." Ask
"which one
replied: "Th
Molloy's
a gun. Molloy knew long
his friend Jam
HUBERT SPENCER
11/3/94
'I killed the killer'
HUBERT WILKES
THE BRIDGEWATER CASE
A STARTLING new statement has shed more light on the macabre coincidence between
September he made a
ent statement:
two farm
Bridgewater case. This
the farmhouse was empty, went back to the hospital and contacted his friend Wilkes with the news that the coast was clear. If Wilkes did indeed have a hand in the murder
the farm, there is an
17/6/94
2/6/95

HOW THE EYE TRACKED THE BRIDGEWATER CASE SINCE HOME SECRETARY CLARKE REFUSED TO RE-OPEN IT IN 1993

firmly on the side of "the reliability of Mrs Johnston's evidence". Their faith in that evidence helped them unanimously to dismiss the appeal and condemn the three appellants to another nine years in prison.

Helen Johnston's consequent career did little to merit the judges' confidence in her. In 1991 she was sentenced to six months in prison on five specimen charges of deception. She had persuaded an old man to lend her £19,000 of the proceeds of the sale of his house so that she could buy a farm in Ireland which didn't exist.

***"UNRELIABLE":** Helen Johston*

Helen Johnston has since died, but her role in this case has recently been revived by a remarkable letter to the *Eye* from former Detective Inspector Fred Marsh. The letter dated 28 February 1997 says:

"I took part in the interview of Helen Johnston on 5 November 1980. The interview was under caution. Johnston insisted that the evidence she had given at the trial was the truth. It was apparent that the evidence Johnston gave was important. My opinion of Johnston as a witness was that she was discredited and unreliable. This was highlighted in the report I helped to prepare... Our report pointed out that Helen Johnston's account of the alleged conversation was hopelessly inaccurate and as such created doubt as to the validity of her evidence. Because of the nagging doubts which I had regarding the safety of the convictions in so far as they depended on the evidence of Helen Johnston, on 3 June 1993 I submitted a report which was sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions. The purpose of my report was to seek reassurance that the report that I was party to preparing had been correctly interpreted by the DPP...

"On 25 June 1993, I was informed that as a result of my report of 3 June 1993 and enclosures, the Crown Prosecution Service, following legal advice, proposed to forward my report to the Home Secretary for his consideration. The Crown Prosecution Service noted that I was acting wholly responsibly in raising my concerns.

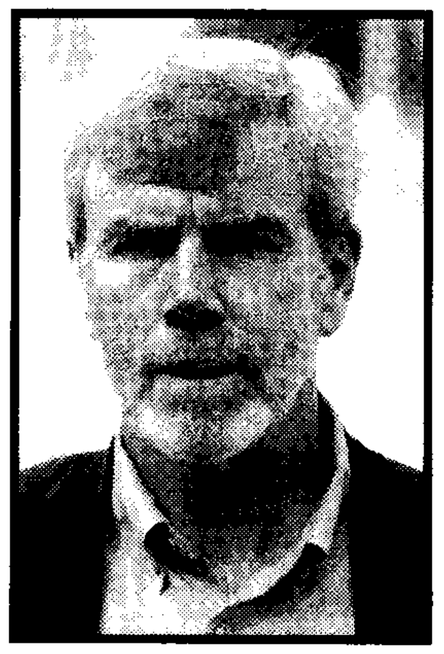
"I retired from the police in September 1995. When I became aware that the Home Secretary (Howard) was not minded to refer the case back to the Court of Appeal I embarked on a course of letter-writing in order to try to influence the Home Secretary's decision. My concern related to the non-disclosure of the November 1980 report. By 13 May 1996 I had established contacts in the Crown Prosecutions Department and I was writing to them frequently in June and July 1996. I informed the CPS that it was in the interests of justice, commonsense and decency that the November 1980 report should be disclosed to the defence.

"I had been aware that the well-established practice in 1988/89 was that police reports were not disclosed. I hope, trust and believe my efforts may have helped the Home Secretary to decide to refer the case back to the Appeal Court. My current position is that I am liaising with Merseyside police regarding my concerns and I have provided them with a statement which I made in October 1996. I believe I may be required to give evidence in the appeal and I am happy to do so."

What happened to the Morgan-Marsh report is not clear. It must have been somewhere at the disposal of the authorities in 1981 and in 1988 when its conclusions about Helen Johnston's evidence were so flatly contradicted by the appeal judges. If Helen Johnston's evidence had been knocked out by the judges in either appeal, as it had been by Mr Morgan and Mr Marsh in 1980, it is difficult to see how the convictions for the murder could have been sustained.

IT'S A COP-OUT!

■ WILL heads roll among those responsible for the fiasco of the Bridgewater prosecution?



***CLEARED :** Derek Treadaway*

Although lots of people were charged after the cases of the Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four, the Tottenham Three and Stefan Kiscko, not one of them was found guilty.

The leniency of the authorities towards police involved in injustice cases is well illustrated by the recently-decided case of Derek Treadaway.

In 1983 Treadaway was convicted of four counts of robberies on post office premises and vans and was sent to prison for 15 years. Throughout this long sentence he protested that he had not done any of the robberies. He had, he always insisted, been forced to confess by four officers who refused him a solicitor, handcuffed his hands behind his back and forced a series of plastic bags over his head. Suffering from a haemorrhage in the chest and thinking he was close to death, he had signed a confession which the police had conveniently written out for him.

When he came out of prison Treadaway sued the four officers, who were still serving in the West Midlands. They were Det Insp John Brown, Det Sgt Tim Russell, Det Sgt Alan Pickering and Det Sgt James Price. All four denied all violence, but Mr Justice McKinnon did not believe them. He described Brown as "a most unsatisfactory witness" whose "stock in trade was ambiguity" and who "simply did not tell the truth". He made it clear he did not believe a word of the evidence of any of the other officers either. He was satisfied "to a high degree of probability" that all four had "cynically" denied their prisoner access to a solicitor and then assaulted him in the monstrous way he had described. The judge awarded Mr Treadaway £50,000 damages.

In November last year Mr Treadaway's appeal against conviction came at last to the Court of Appeal where it had been referred by the home secretary. Lord Justice Rose and messrs Justice Latham and Hooper heard that two of the police officers had been summonsed to the court to give evidence about their handling of supergrasses who had given evidence in the original trial. Neither officer appeared. Said Lord Justice Rose: "We are told that within the last 72 hours, and that must be after the witness summons was served upon him, Brown has gone to Egypt. We are told that so far as Russell is concerned, although he too appears to have had a witness summons served on him, there is in existence a note from his general practitioner which states no more and no less than that Russell is not fit to attend court. Mr Goldring, QC for the prosecution, is in the difficult and embarrassing position of being wholly unable to provide any satisfactory explanation as to why the summons from this court to those two witnesses has not been properly complied with."

The judges unanimously quashed the Treadaway conviction on the ground that the evidence of the police officers and the supergrasses was tainted. At the end of the case they ordered Brown and Russell to explain why they were not present. The two men made affidavits. The lord chancellor's office told the *Eye* last month that the judges had decided to take no action against Brown or Russell for contempt of court.

Det Supt Brown left the police in December. The other three are still serving, though Inspector Russell was suspended last May pending inquiries into "allegations of sexual impropriety" made by a civilian employee of the West Midlands police. According to the *Sun* of 17 May last year, a DNA test was carried out on the officer, and, for some strange reason, on the carpet at the police station. None of these officers have been prosecuted or even disciplined for their behaviour in the Treadaway case.

COPSWALLOP!

■ "FOR the 'Bridgewater Three', as well as their families and well-wishers, the quashing of their convictions today will come as a moment of triumph and delight," the *Express* announced happily on the morning of their release. "The Bridgewater Three are about to get the justice they have sought."

Indeed — but with no thanks to the *Daily Express*. On 11 April last year, it carried a front-page splash lambasting the BBC programme *Rough Justice* for daring to question the Bridgewater verdict. WHY DON'T THEY THINK OF CARL? screamed the headline, over an article denouncing "campaigners" on the subject for their "one-sided" view. This was backed by a furious editorial which insisted that none of the inquiries into the case "have [*sic*] produced anything to suggest that those convictions were unsafe".

When the Bridgewater Three were finally freed two weeks ago, the *Express* suggested that "criticism will now be levelled at the six appeal court judges who upheld the verdicts". With typical modesty, the paper's editor – devout Christian Richard Addis — quite forgot to mention his own heroic campaign to keep them in jail.

COP THIS!

■ THE two constables who interviewed Pat Molloy, whose crucial confession has now been comprehensively demolished, were John Perkins and Graham Leeke.

Perkins, whose expertise in beating confessions out of suspects has been set out in many issues of the *Eye* (816, for instance), is dead. What about Leeke?

In 1993 Mr Leeke told the *Eye:* "I have nothing to hide. I never have had. My conscience is perfectly clear. Mr Molloy was dealt with perfectly proper and until the day I go six foot under nothing will ever change my comment to that and I see all these programmes and what's being said and I feel totally frustrated that people are making things out that are not true... All those nasty incidents about Molloy are totally fabricated. Believe me, they are totally fabricated."

GRAHAM LEEKE

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

In the City

THE MAN with the most interesting story to tell was never heard during the trial of corrupt tax inspector Michael Allcock. Former stockbroker, bankrupt and City supergrass Jonathan Bekhor was not called by the prosecution although he had been listed initially as a witness.

This was a not altogether surprising decision given Bekhor's pronounced credibility problem. He and truth have often been strangers. But the consequence was that the way in which deputy prime minister Michael Heseltine had come to feature in the Allcock affair was never disclosed. For it was Bekhor who (unjustifiably) put Heseltine in the frame.

From being one of the City's biggest stockbrokers — his army of half-commission men generated 10 percent of all stock market deals at A.J. Bekhor's peak — the wily and slippery Bekhor was in big trouble by the time Allcock got on his case in 1988.

Bekhor had suffered several big hits as a result of the market crash the previous year. He was also on the stock exchange list of unwanted brokers and unlikely to obtain a licence under the new regulatory regime. Allcock and his partner Richard Cook — also not called as a witness at the trial because of his considered lack of truthfulness and forthcoming role in disciplinary proceedings — added substantially to Bekhor's woes.

Allcock had obtained Bekhor's name from the stock exchange's list of usual suspects — the brokers who were always there or thereabouts when it came to suspect share deals. Like many other firms on that list, Bekhor dealt for a vast array of offshore companies which hid the true identity of those who benefited from the dubious deals. At the very least many of these companies were evading tax. Many were also clearly hiding the proceeds of insider dealing.

The Inland Revenue was soon assessing Bekhor for unpaid tax of £11m going back to 1984, which with interest and penalties totted up to £22m. Both Bekhor and his firm were bust. But the strong suspicion was that Bekhor had money secreted away in Switzerland. In particular this was suspected to have come from the up to £10m profit that had been made through the promotion of Pro-Lab, a company whose Swiss-controlled shares were bought for 1p and sold for £10 to unlucky Bekhor clients. The software company, despite promising much, delivered little to anyone other than the Swiss sellers.

Desperate, Bekhor embarked on a bid to save himself by giving up everyone in sight. He handed over details of thousands of clients to the revenue. He identified those he claimed were behind 1,000 offshore companies for whom his firm had acted. And most important of all, he gave Allcock a Top Twenty list of individuals he claimed had engaged in share deals using offshore companies. The list included just over 20 groups of names totalling some 70 individuals. At the head of that list was a group Bekhor claimed was connected with Michael Heseltine. This group, alleged Bekhor, had made more than £10m dealing offshore.

The Heseltine connection was said to be small-time City financier Nicholas Oppenheim, whom Bekhor identified as a client for some 10 years. Linked with Oppenheim — who had been a director of several successful and not so successful listed companies such as Tranwood and Bear Brand — was a Swiss associate of Oppenheim, Felix Colander, and the former senior partner of brokers Laing & Cruickshank, Robin Stormonth-Darling, whose firm had acted for Oppenheim's companies. Underneath these three names was written, by Bekhor, Heseltine's name in brackets.

Bekhor never produced any evidence to support his allegation. Instead he told Allcock this could come from Oppenheim. It did not. Perhaps not surprising as Heseltine firmly denies knowing Bekhor, Oppenheim or the others. Indeed, Bekhor subsequently denied ever acting for or knowing Heseltine. Furthermore he declared that it was Allcock who wanted him to falsely implicate Heseltine. The Revenue itself refused to allow Allcock to mount any investigation of Heseltine so flimsy and uncorroborated was the Bekhor allegation.

Bekhor's subsequent failure to provide any support for his allegation leads to the impression that this was just another bid to buy time, save himself and cut an advantageous settlement with the eager Allcock who appeared transfixed by the prospect of targeting a government minister. So much so that he resumed negotiations with Bekhor — who baited the trap with free trips to California and New York and finally a Concorde trip which was only prevented by Allcock's suspension — even after he failed to pay an agreed £1.25m settlement to be funded from Switzerland.

The unconvincing nature of the Heseltine allegation and its subsequent retraction may alone explain why Bekhor was not called to give evidence against Allcock. So too may have been his well documented history of half-truths and lies to the Revenue, around whom he waltzed to such good effect that he has so far escaped paying all but £10,000 of what he owes in return for promises to pay and promises to testify which have been repeatedly broken. It may also have been the case that the thought of having the Heseltine name bounced around the Old Bailey courtroom did not play well in Whitehall.

But as a result we were unable to hear some fascinating other details of the Bekhor story, in particular regarding Oppenheim who is a distant relative of junior minister Philip and former minister Sally. Such as Bekhor's story of how he came to hand over a suitcase containing around £750,000 in cash to Oppenheim in a car at Zurich airport. Oppenheim, he said, gave him an identical but empty case and later a video camera as a present. The money had been drawn from a Swiss account at Oppenheim's instruction, said Bekhor, who explained it was the proceeds of assorted share deals done through Swiss-based companies.

Remarkably this story was largely confirmed by Oppenheim to the Revenue. However, far from the money being his, Oppenheim said it belonged to Colander for whom Oppenheim was acting. The real recipient of the money was said to be a non-resident whom Oppenheim identified as John Dobbs.

All this emerged as a result of the Revenue investigation of Oppenheim sparked by the Bekhor allegation. The Revenue was embarrassed to discover that Oppenheim was a commissioner of taxes, sitting in judgment on tax cases. So the investigation was handed over by Allcock's special office team to

the Revenue's heavy duty investigators at Enquiry Branch.

Oppenheim vehemently denied Bekhor's allegation that he was engaged in undeclared personal share dealings. This explanation was accepted by the Revenue. However, Oppenheim did volunteer to make a substantial secret settlement with the Revenue regarding his tax liability for money which had passed through him as an agent.

The Revenue pursued all those former partners, half-commission men and clients whom Bekhor "grassed up". Those named included Polly Peck fugitive Asil Nadir. Bekhor helped provide the key to the Geneva-based letter box companies used by Nadir and his associates to ramp the Polly Peck share price, initially to make offshore profits and later in a vain bid to support the shares. Such was Bekhor's knowledge that he was expected to be called as a defence witness in the trial last year of Nadir's top lieutenant, Elizabeth Forsyth. But once again he did not show.

Bekhor also named Allcock's co-defendant David Shamoon, another client, with whom he was in dispute over money the broker had lost or stolen from a north London orthodox Jewish school. Shamoon was acquitted at the direction of the trial judge of one charge of corruption. Allcock was alleged to have put the squeeze on Bekhor to repay the £100,000-plus involved as a favour to Shamoon. This evidence too was never heard.

Given his scattergun of allegations, many found to be untrue and/or malicious, it is no surprise that Bekhor was and is not the most popular of men. Many of those he gave up to the Revenue soon suspected he was the informer, despite Bekhor obtaining agreements to secrecy as well as immunity. Bekhor claims to have been the target of death threats and stun gun attacks for which he blames his creditors (other than the Revenue) who are owed a mere £15m. Many of these do not buy his self-professed penniless status given his lifestyle in California and New York. Bekhor insists this is due to the generosity of a rich wife and wealthy sister. Others are not so sure. They point to the millions that went to Switzerland and never came back.

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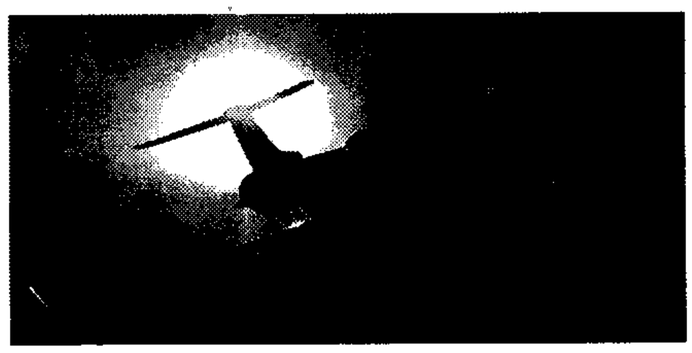

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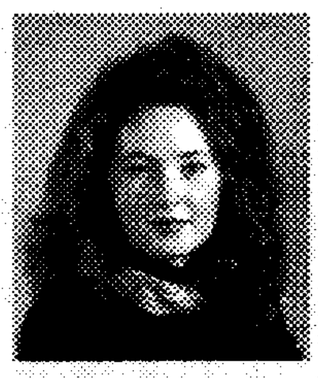

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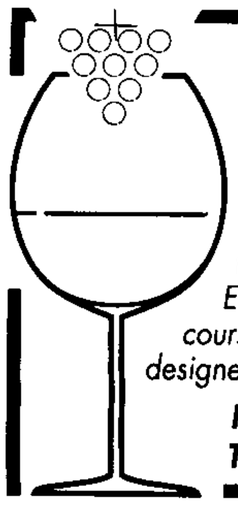

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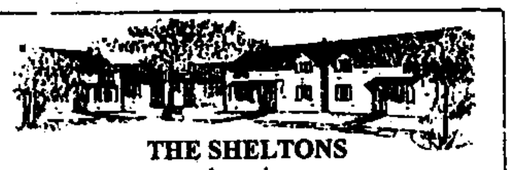

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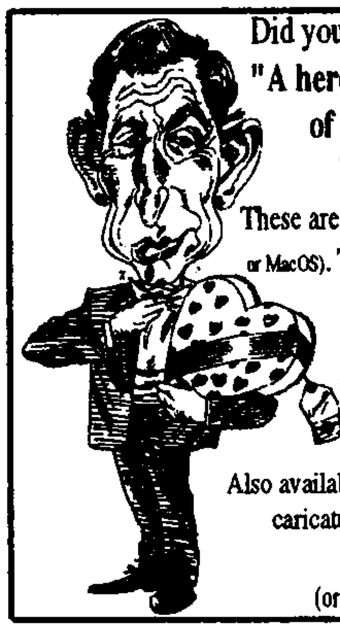

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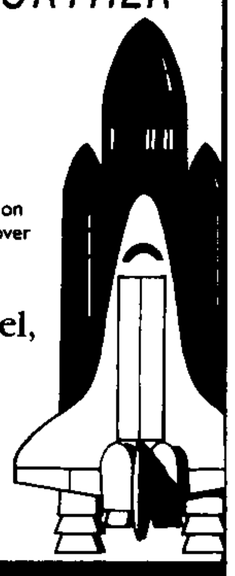

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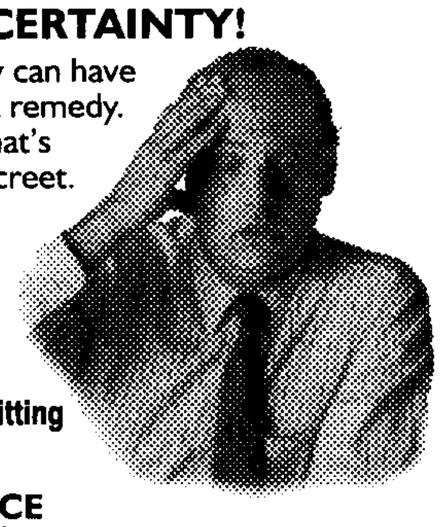

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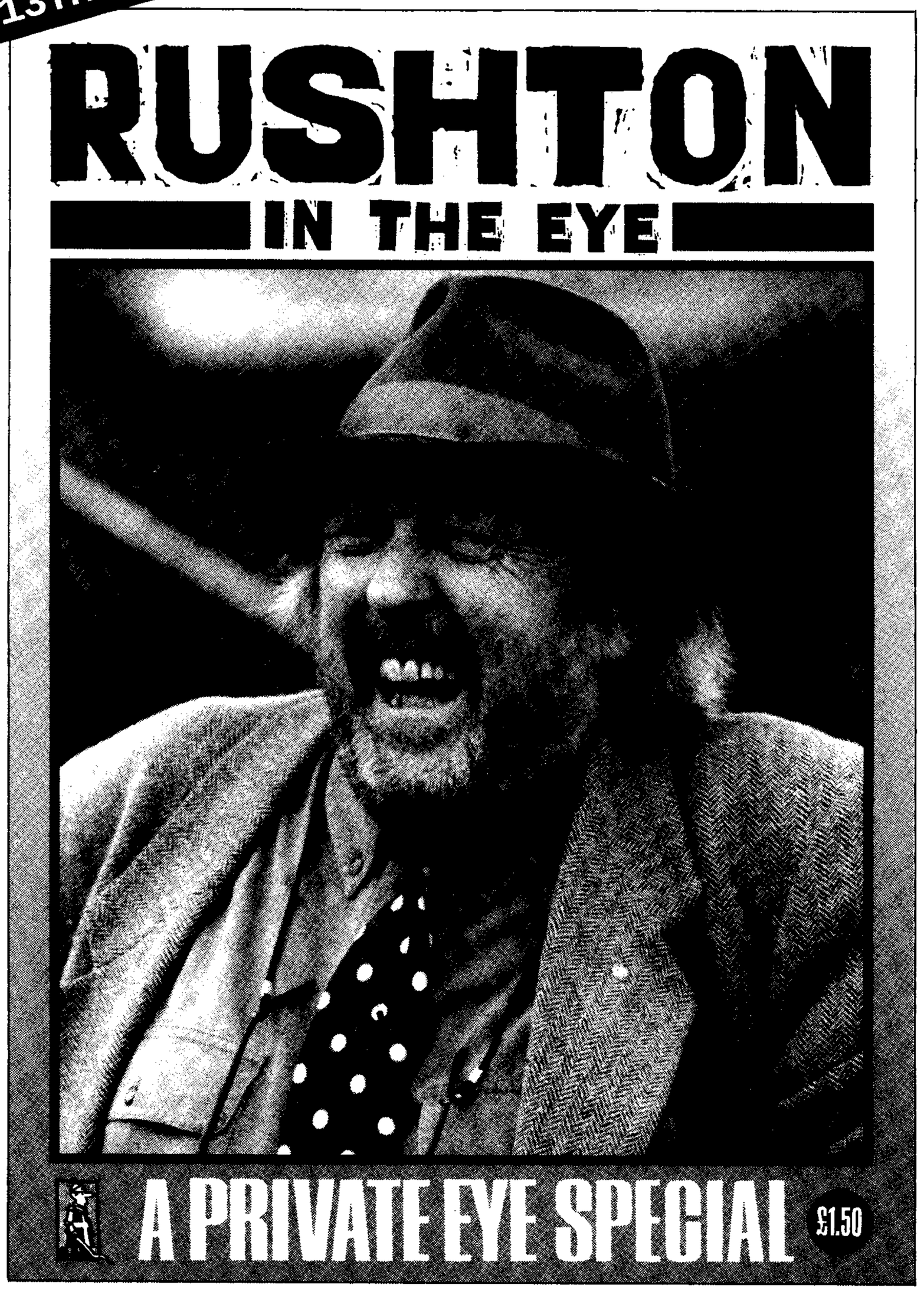

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